Bombing raps against MILF leaders dropped

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2001 ★ 58 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 76 ₱15

Angry Marines force Navy chief to retire

By Carlito Pablo

THERE'S trouble between the Marine Corps and Rear Admiral Guillermo Wong, the Navy flag officer in command, and sources say it stemmed from irregularities in the procurement of military supplies.

The Marines are reportedly asking for the

ANGRY/ A20

GMA reveals support of 5 military groups

FOR the first time, President Macapagal-Arroyo revealed last night that she had been talking with five different groups within the Armed Forces of the Philippines as early as January last year at the outbreak of the BW insider trading scandal.

One of the groups was headed by the chief of staff of the AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes.

GMA REVEALS/ A20

Ani discloses Loi's ₱110-M withdrawal

THE LION of the prosecution panel at the impeachment court is a shy pussycat on stage at the San Fernando, Pampanga, town plaza where President Macapagal campaigns for the candidates of the People Power Coalition on Tuesday.

JOAN BONDOC

By Michael Lim Ubac and Volt Contreras

ONLY three weeks ago, former first lady Luisa "Loi" P. Ejercito, a senatorial candidate of the "Puwersa ng Masa," withdrew a total of P110,198,503 from her three accounts with Citibank, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto disclosed yesterday.

Desierto said only P1.4 million was left with her accounts with the Citibank branch at Virra Mall in Greenhills, San Juan, after the withdrawal on Feb. 1.

He made the disclosure after Citibank officials turned over yesterday to the Office of the Ombudsman statements of account of the wife of disgraced President Joseph Estrada.

Ejercito was able to withdraw the amount despite the order of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) on Jan. 23 to freeze the accounts of Estrada and his wife with Citibank-Virra Mall branch.

The BIR order came as protesters blocked the entrance to the Citibank branch following reports that Estrada and members of his family were planning to withdraw $3 million and P100 million from the bank.

Desierto subpoenaed the bank records of Estrada, his wife and his mistresses at Citibank and 10 other banks for evidence in the complaint for forfeiture filed by private prosecutors and 82 "People Power" groups.

The complainants want Estrada's assets, estimated at P20 billion, to be seized by the government.

Based on Citibank records, Ejercito had deposited a total of P110,579,894.28 into Account No. 0000166820 (Peso sa Citi Plus); P437,741.61 into Account No. 0016016343 (Peso Maxi); and P621,556.65 into Account No. 00197653 (Peso Citi Savings Account Plus).

ANI/ A21

'Inapplicable, inaccurate, impractical, unlawful'

By Martin P. Marfil

INAPPLICABLE. Inaccurate. Impractical. Illegal.

These were the reactions of opponents of ousted leader Joseph Estrada to his latest argument before the Supreme Court that the country can have two Presidents—one acting, the other on leave.

Even so, the court yesterday issued a clarification that tended to fuel the controversy involving Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption of the presidency.

The court denied speculation that it issued a resolution declaring the presidency vacant on Jan. 20, the day Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. swore in Ms Macapagal as Estrada was preparing to leave

INAPPLICABLE/ A21

Gagged but hands not tied, says Desierto

By Rocky Nazareno, Michael Lim Ubac, Donna S. Cueto and Martin P. Marfil

THEY MAY be gagged but their hands are not tied.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto yesterday said he would continue the investigation of other graft cases involving ousted President Joseph Estrada after the Supreme Court granted him a one-month reprieve from criminal indictments.

"No problem," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said of the tribunal's resolution.

Perez said the resolution did not bar the Department of Justice from "filing new cases" and the Ombudsman from investigating the new cases.

"As long as these do not have

GAGGED/ A21

'RP, mother of all people power actions'

By TJ Burgonio

ON THE EVE of the 15TH anniversary of People Power I, which he called "the mother of all people power movements around the world," former President Fidel Ramos said that because of the Philippine example, the countries that adopted a democratic form of government gradually increased to 74 in 1997.

"Though it happened (15) years ago, People Power I is still worth celebrating because it has served as a model to other countries ruled by dictators," said Ramos, a major player in the bloodless people's re-

RP/ A20

GMA asks 'Kabalens' to vote 13-0

By Armand N. Nocum, Cathy C. Yamsuan and Tonette Orejas

IGNORING the rain, President Macapagal-Arroyo visited Pampanga Tuesday night to woo the support of the province's one million voters for the ruling coalition's senatorial candidates, but conspicuously stayed away from Lubao, the hometown of her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal.

Local Lakas-NUCD leaders said she did not visit Lubao to avoid drawing more attention to her alleged, though repeatedly denied, links with known "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" "Pineda. The latter's wife, Lilia, is mayor of the town.

In her first visit to the area since she assumed the presidency, Ms Macapagal urged province mates in San Fernando City to vote 13-0 in favor of the People Power Coalition candidates "because they helped make a Kapampangan President (and) perhaps it is only proper that Kapampangans repay them."

Yesterday, she changed tack when she sought the support of Chinese-Filipino businessmen for the administration ticket, saying that the 13 candidates were part of her grand plan for good governance and economic recovery.

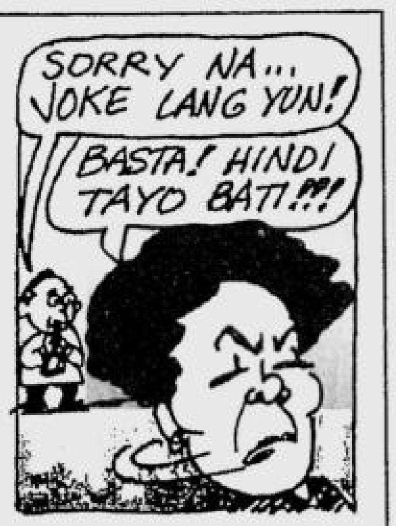
In Nueva Ecija, bailiwick of the staunchly pro-Estrada Joson clan, former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito and six other candidates on the opposition ticket "Puwersa ng Masa" held their first provincial sortie Monday afternoon.

The candidates of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-led coalition described Nueva Ecija as the "province which does not abandon its friends" and predicted that Novo Ecijanos would support them as overwhelmingly as they backed

GMA/ A20

Flavier says Miriam incurably lovable

By Juliet L. Javellana


SORRY NA... JOKE LANG YUN!
BASTA! HINDI TAYO BATI!?!

THE COMICAL Sen. Juan Flavier yesterday turned serious as he tried to proffer apologies and makeup with his fellow reelectionist, Sen. Miriam Santiago.

But she wasn't talking to him after the INQUIRER reported on Wednesday that Flavier told the media in San Fernando, Pampanga, that as a "good doctor" he could cure his colleagues in the Senate of their ailments except for the "incurable" Santiago's "condition."

FLAVIER/ A20

Estrada to tour country to campaign for his bets

By Volt Contreras

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada yesterday revealed plans to tour the country to personally campaign for his candidates in the May elections.

In an interview with the INQUIRER at his residence in Polk Street, North Greenhills in San Juan, Mr. Estrada said the campaign season "will be my chance to have my side heard by the people" in connection with the charges against him in his aborted impeachment trial.

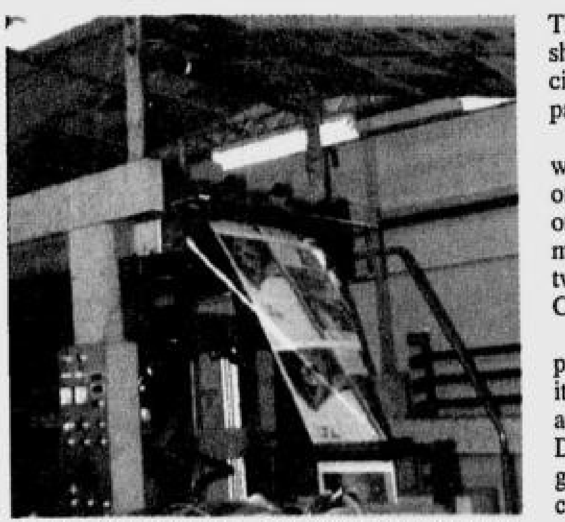
"I was not given a chance in court, at the Senate blue ribbon (hearings), in the impeachment trial court. I was not given my chance to air my side," he said.

A month-long reprieve from prosecution has apparently emboldened the disgraced president to openly contemplate a full return to public life, a month after People Power II drove him out of Malacañang.

Saying his spirits were lifted by Tuesday's Supreme Court ruling giving him the 30-day

ESTRADA/ A21

Inquirer inaugurates new printing plants in Davao, Cebu



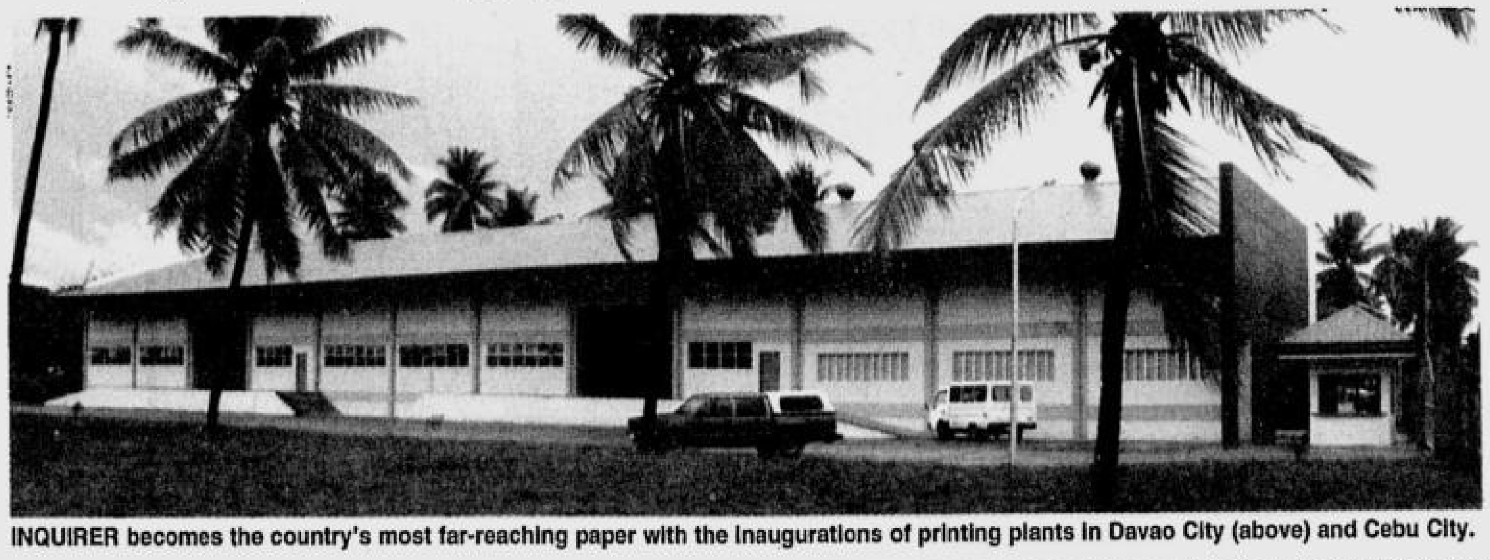
DAVAO plant's 12 Solna D2525 2:1 printing units.

THE COUNTRY'S largest broadsheet is now also its most widely circulated, most far-reaching newspaper.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer will now be available in all corners of the archipelago with the opening of the electronic link between the main printing press in Manila and two new printing plants in Cebu City and Davao City.

The FEP Printing Corp., which prints the INQUIRER, will open today its new printing press in Cebu City and inaugurate its new press in Davao City tomorrow. Both inaugural ceremonies will be led by chair Marixi Prieto and director

INQUIRER/ A21



INQUIRER becomes the country's most far-reaching paper with the inaugurations of printing plants in Davao City (above) and Cebu City.

Second FRONT PAGE

TAMANG DAAN NA SANA ITO TUNGO SA KAPAYAPAAN!

2 Rowe killers left out of amnesty

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has agreed to release 73 political prisoners in a goodwill gesture to rebels, but the convicted killers of a US Army colonel will stay in jail, a senior official said yesterday.

Leftist rebels Donato Continente and Juanito Itaas are serving life terms after being convicted of killing US Army Col. James Rowe in a street ambush in 1989 and they will not be released.

"Not everybody is included. We are deciding them on a case-to-case basis," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez told a news conference called to discuss the amnesty.

The United States Embassy had opposed appeals in recent years by local human rights group for the release of the pair, saying Manila and Washington were parties to an international agreement discouraging terrorism.

Arroyo on Monday initially approved the release of 49 prisoners and 24 more have been added to the list since then, Perez said.

The initial batch of 49 included 20 suspected members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front linked to the bombing of two Manila shopping malls last year. The others were suspected of belonging to the communist New People's Army.

The MILF is the biggest group fighting for an Islamic state in Mindanao while the NPA is fighting for the establishment of a Marxist state. *Reuters*

Raps vs MILF leaders dropped

By Rocky Nazareno

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has withdrawn criminal charges against Moro Islamic Liberation Front chair Salamat Hashim and five others for the Dec. 30, 2000 bombings in Metro Manila.

This was revealed yesterday by Justice Secretary Hernando Perez who also announced that 24 more political prisoners have been recommended for release in government moves to entice the communist National Democratic Front and the separatist MILF to return to the peace table.

Perez said the charges of multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder brought against Salamat and MILF vice chairs Ghadzali Jaafar, Al-Haj Murad and Aleem Aziz Mimbantas, among others, have been withdrawn and brought back to the DOJ for reinvestigation.

The charges were filed against the MILF leaders on the basis of documents reportedly found in a captured rebel camp which purported to show that the group was planning to bomb malls, utilities, transportation facilities and infrastructure in Metro Manila.

"The government is interested in lasting peace. After the SOMO (suspension of offensive military operations), we are showing the MILF that (the withdrawal of charges and release of political prisoners) are the right steps toward peace," Perez said.

But the justice secretary said the charges against Ismael Abas, who was arrested for the bombing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on that day, will remain.

Abas, according to reports, was positively identified by witnesses to the bombing of a cargo warehouse, and the car that carried the bomb was allegedly linked to him.

The release of the 24 political prisoners will follow the granting of freedom to 49 detainees by President Macapagal-Arroyo last Monday.

First batch

Perez identified the second batch of prisoners as Giagmal T. Tongke, Dante M. Awel, Tantalie M. Alitreki, Jade K. Mangko, Tomas Brusas, Ronilo Mapinhag, Alberto Beron, Remegio Yasay, Oscar Oliva, Amaencio Mesario;

Vivencio Lagada, Pablito Plaza, Edylizon Hortelano and Basiledes Baddion, Danilo Navasquez, Manuel Isetada, Rolieto Anquillano, Nieto Duque, Nestor Javier, Marlon Dayap, Ramilo Orgasan, Julito Tobias, Modesto Tobias and Bartolome Tobias.

Perez said the list should have included four more prisoners but the special committee reviewing their records has not completed its job.

"One of them is NPA leader Leoncio Pitao, alias Kumander Parago. His release is still being discussed with the military," he said.

Pitao led an NPA regional unit that seized two ranking Army officers and held them captive for three months in 1999.

Muslim rebels said yesterday the government SOMO could help revive peace talks but they will "wait and see" if the military actually halts its offensive in Mindanao.

Ceasefire

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said, however, the ceasefire ordered by Ms Macapagal on Tuesday "gives added impetus to the desire to resume peace negotiations as soon as possible.

"We welcome this with reservations," Kabalu told a Mindanao radio station.

"When we feel the Army will no longer launch offensives, then we can be convinced that the government is really sincere," he added.

SALAMAT

Macapagal said the SOMO would take effect as soon as she issues an executive order. She said she hopes the rebels will reciprocate quickly.

Since becoming president Jan. 20, Macapagal has made the resumption of peace talks with the MILF and the NDF a high priority.

The MILF is fighting for a separate Islamic state in southern Philippines, while the communist guerrillas are waging a Marxist insurgency nationwide.

Peace talks with the MILF collapsed last year after then President Joseph Estrada ordered a massive military campaign that captured many rebel camps in Mindanao.

Fostering new talks

Ms Macapagal said her order was meant to foster new talks, allow thousands of displaced persons to return to their homes and pave the way for rehabilitation and development projects in the region.

Communist rebels called off talks with the government after the Philippine Senate approved the Visiting Forces Agreement in 1999, which allowed for the resumption of large-scale US military exercises in the country.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday welcomed the SOMO called by Ms Macapagal but cautioned that public safety and security should not be jeopardized with its implementation.

"Even if we resume peace talks with the MILF, if the group commits criminal acts, the government would be justified in responding appropriately," Biazon told a news briefing. *With Christine Avendaño and a report from AP*

Amado Cortez wants 6 more months as consul

By Dona Pazzibugan

FORMER movie actor Amado Cortez, a political appointee as consul general to San Francisco, has asked that his tenure be extended for at least another six months.

Cortez and 21 non-career ambassadors appointed by ousted President Joseph Estrada were recalled by Malacañang in late January and are supposed to return to the country within 60 days.

A top Department of Foreign Affairs official said Cortez's wife, former movie actress Gloria Sevilla, is lobbying Malacañang to have Cortez re-appointed.

It was Sevilla who was instrumental in getting Estrada to appoint Cortez as consul general in 1998 over the strong protests of career diplomats, DFA sources said.

Working hard

"She is really working hard to have him reappointed. We heard Malacañang would extend (his term) for six months," the official said.

The 72-year-old Cortez is said to be suffering from tuberculosis and serious ailments of the heart, lung and kidney.

Estrada refused to act on a request of former Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon Jr. in November last year to recall Cortez whom Siazon described as a "very sick man."

The new Foreign Secretary, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., appears not to be too keen about extending Cortez's tenure either.

In a news conference Friday, Guingona could not hide his surprise when he was informed by Undersecretary Lauro Baja Jr. that Cortez had requested that he be allowed to use up his "remaining leave credits" until April.

"Until April?" Guingona blurted out.

Guingona said he had certain individuals in mind for certain diplomatic positions, but declined to elaborate.

Cortez earlier this month asked the Office of the President to pay for his hospital bills amounting to at least $100,000 since he could not pay for this himself, according to the DFA sources.

This prompted comments from some career diplomats that Cortez could be holding on to the consul general post so he can continue to avail of the medical benefits given to diplomats.

Judging from the seriousness of his condition, they said, Cortez was already ill when he assumed office in 1998.

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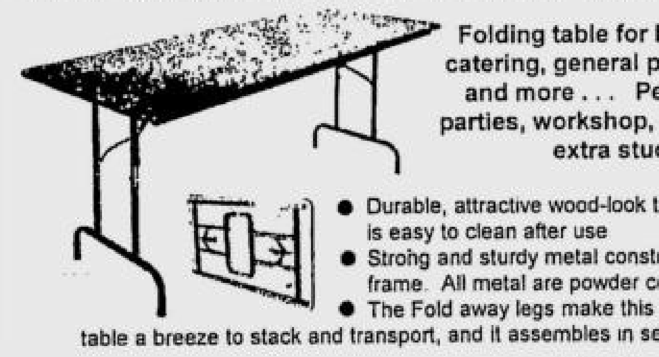

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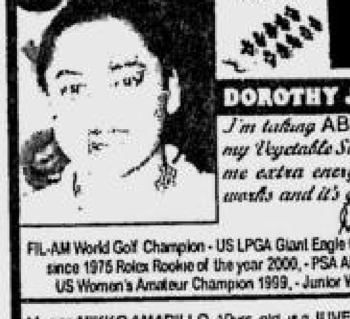

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POSTPONES RAFFLE DRAW
The Gumaca National High School Alumni Association wishes to announce that due to unavoidable circumstances, the raffle draw for the grand prize for the raffle-for-a-school building project scheduled for February 23, 2001 has been postponed indefinitely. GNHSAA will make a subsequent announcement once the new draw date is firmed up.

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Tessie's aide helped Laarni sneak back

BY TJ BURGONIO

THE CHIEF aide of Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta is under fire for allegedly facilitating Laarni Enriquez's flouting of immigration procedures when she arrived from Guam on Sunday night.

Immigration officials yesterday asked airport general manager Edgardo Manda to impose sanctions on Jake Acuña, Oreta's chief of staff and former executive assistant of the Manila International Airport Authority, for breach of security.

Continental Micronesia, the airline that flew the mistress of ousted President Joseph Estrada from Guam, has been slapped with a P50,000 fine for failing to account for Enriquez.

Access pass

Airport authorities are also looking into revoking another access pass issued to Acuña in his capacity as an Oreta aide. His ID as former MIAA official was recalled after he quit his post last month.

Danilo Almeda, chief of the Bureau of Immigration unit at the Naia, said Acuña "deliberately facilitated (Enriquez's) entry at the airport so she could avoid the immigration primary inspection. This is a breach of security. He should be sanctioned by the airport general manager."

As a former airport official, Acuña should have known that he is not allowed to facilitate the arrival and departure of VIPs at the airport, Almeda added.

Manda, who was in Cagayan de Oro City, could not be reached for comment.

Acuña and an airport policeman known only as "DJ," both known to be supporters of Estrada, had been tagged as Enriquez's escorts when she arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Sunday night and left the terminal without clearing through immigration. Acuña has denied this.

Closed circuit TV

But airport sources said a review of the airport's closed circuit TV showed Acuña escorting Enriquez.

On Tuesday, Continental Micronesia was fined P50,000 by immigration officials for failing to account for Enriquez, whose arrival was kept from airport authorities.

"They can only contest that if they can prove that she passed through the immigration counter," said Ma. Carmen del Castillo, BI special assistant for legal affairs.

In the wake of the Enriquez incident, Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo has asked Manda to cancel access passes issued to police officers closely identified with Estrada.

News of Enriquez's arrival surprised immigration officers at the Naia, who claimed that they had no record of her arrival.

It was later established that Enriquez did not pass through the immigration counter after immigration officials failed to find her name in their arrival records or her arrival card in their files.

They also learned from airport personnel that Acuña had escorted her out of the Naia.

He was a ghost engineer and didn't know it

FOR the past two years, Zubair Murad has been a "municipal engineer" on a local government payroll and his signature appeared on documents pertaining to an anomalous infrastructure project in Mindanao—and he didn't even know it.

Murad, a wheelchair-bound mechanical engineer from Marawi City, went to the Department of Interior and Local Government head office in Quezon City Tuesday to lodge a complaint against a Lanao del Sur town mayor for his "ghost" appointment.

Murad, 45, said that without his knowledge, Mayor Hadji Hashim Abdul of Mulondo town named him municipal engineer in 1998.

"It would appear that he was on the municipal government's payroll without his knowing it," according to Police Supt. Carlos Baltazar, head of the DILG's special task force which heard Murad's complaint.

Baltazar said Murad only learned about his "appointment" in December last year "when fellow engineers told him they saw his signature on papers related to one of the projects of the mayor," Baltazar told the INQUIRER.

Murad did not say what the project was, "only that it was a ghost project," Baltazar added.

Murad's complaint was referred to the resident Ombudsman and to the DILG's Region XII office.

Baltazar said Murad was planning to sue the mayor for usurpation of authority, graft and corruption, falsification of public documents and malversation of public funds.

He did not say if he was going to collect "back pay." *Volt Contreras*

Now you can dial for a passport

AFTER DIALING for a pizza and Chinese food, one could soon also call up a new passport if one was too busy to go down to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

DFA Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. yesterday signed a one-year contract with Pilipinas Teleserv Inc. to set up a nationwide "passport renewal dropbox system."

A call to a toll-free number anytime of the day at anytime of the year will bring a courier to the caller's doorstep to pick up his passport application form, old passport and other documents anywhere in the country.

The courier will deliver the new passport to the applicant within seven days from date of pickup, guaranteed, according to Raffy David, Teleserv marketing director.

The special service will cost P550 on top of the passport fee of P650—for a total of P1,200 payable on pickup of the old passport.

The system will be in place March 12. The hotline number was not announced.

Applicants can still go to the DFA to get their passports renewed, however.

David said the delivery service is for people who are too busy to renew their passports themselves.

The DFA has reportedly created a special group to process renewals exclusively under the dropbox system to ensure the seven-day turn-around time.

Teleserv is the same company behind the National Statistics Office Helpline Plus! service that allows for the ordering of documents such as birth and marriage certificates from anywhere in the country by calling tel. no. 737-1111. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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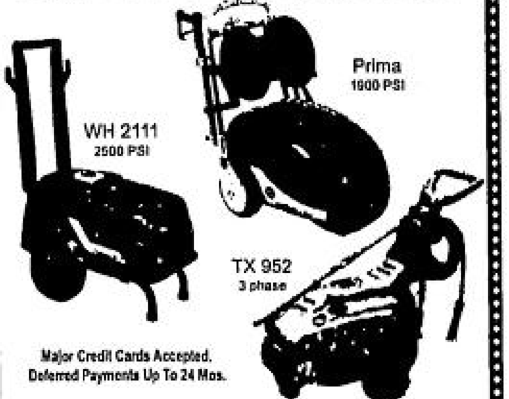

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SEC gives nod to Inq7

BY LEO MAGNO

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission approved on Feb. 20 the incorporation of INQ7 Interactive Inc., the joint Internet news delivery company of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc. The website, at www.inq7.net, will be launched on Feb. 27 at the GMA Network Center with President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

Owners of the company are unfazed by the restructuring of "dotcoms" and the job cuts, which many Internet firms are going through after the initial dotcom euphoria which started last year.

"Whatever is happening with dotcoms, the rationale for our Internet business remains: combining the news efforts of GMA, the most awarded TV network, and the INQUIRER, the most credible newspaper, can only result in the best quality news service to Filipinos around the world," said Dennis Valdes, president and CEO of INQ7.net. "We believe this long-term vision—of providing first-class news via the Internet—is an excellent business foundation."

Judith Duavit-Vazquez, chair of the board of INQ7.net, said the joint venture between the two media giants is, in a way, part of GMA Network's globalization efforts.

"The investment of GMA Network in INQ7.net has nothing to do with the dotcom fever. It has everything to do with the belief in the globalization of business, and the long-term and increasing value of the Internet," she said.

INQ7.net has been buoyed by an unprecedented number of visitors since the impeachment trial of former president Joseph Estrada. The site has been delivering breaking news and real-time audio, video and text reports, especially during Edsa People Power II. In one day, the site was able to generate two million page views, meaning various webpages of the site were viewed two million times in one day.

"While the impeachment trial and People Power II adversely affected most businesses, our website traffic continues to grow by leaps and bounds because Filipinos overseas are so hungry for news from the Philippines," said Valdes. "We receive e-mail feedback from Filipino seamen, overseas workers, students and other expatriates—all of them thanking us for broadcasting news live over the Internet. Without this they would not be able to know what is really happening here."

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ROGER MARGALLO

US REP. Bob Filner (center) is welcomed at the airport by Consul Sonny Busa (left) and retired Lt. Gen. Raul Urgello.

Gloria takeover was done appropriately, says US solon

BY JENNIE L. ILUSTRE

On the eve of the 15th anniversary of People Power I, a visiting American lawmaker said that "the transfer of power last month was done appropriately," and expressed support for the new administration.

In separate calls on President Macapagal-Arroyo, Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Armed Forces chief of staff General Angelo Reyes yesterday afternoon, Congressman Bob Filner, stressed his confidence in the government."

"I would like to express my support for President Arroyo and her new administration. We have great confidence in her and in her programs," he said in a press conference in Malacañang.

"The Philippines is an important ally of the United States and a major trading partner, and it has critical and strategic importance in the region," he said earlier in Camp Aguinaldo. "We hope to provide President Macapagal with what she needs for a stable government."

In a brief interview after his call on the President, Filner told the INQUIRER that "the transfer of government last month was done appropriately, and President Macapagal deserves our support."

During the 25-minute call in Malacañang, with Vice President Teofisto Guingona and US Embassy officials present, Ms Macapagal thanked Filner for his efforts to help Filipino veterans.

At 4:15 p.m., the President, wearing a pastel dress and a big smile, warmly welcomed a barong Tagalog-attired Filner like a long-lost friend. The two had met previously in Filner's home state in San Diego, California.

"I know Congressman Filner's work on behalf of our veterans, and I'm very grateful to him," she said. She also expressed appreciation that the lawmaker fosters friendship and goodwill in his district. "He attends all the barrio fiestas," she kidded, and other Filipino American community gatherings.

Twenty percent of Filner's constituents in his district is of Philippine descent.

The Democratic congressman is the co-author of H.R. 491, The Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which was re-introduced in the 107th Congress on Feb. 7. The bill seeks to grant pension and health care to Filipino World War II veterans with nonservice-connected (not war-related) disability or ailment.

In separate press conferences, Filner said he was expressing his views as an elected member of Congress. "I am not speaking for the State Department, or for the President," he said. "But her credentials and experience in public service are well-known. We knew her as a senator and as a Cabinet member."

Filner was accompanied in Malacañang by Michael E. Malinowski, charge d'affaires of the US Embassy, Consul Sonny Busa, Judith B. Cefkin, counselor for political affairs, and press attaché Tom Skipper. Also present in Malacañang were Ermita, retired Lt. Gen. Raul S. Urgello, head of the Philippine office of Veterans Affairs in Washington, D.C. and Assistant Secretary Rey Carandang.

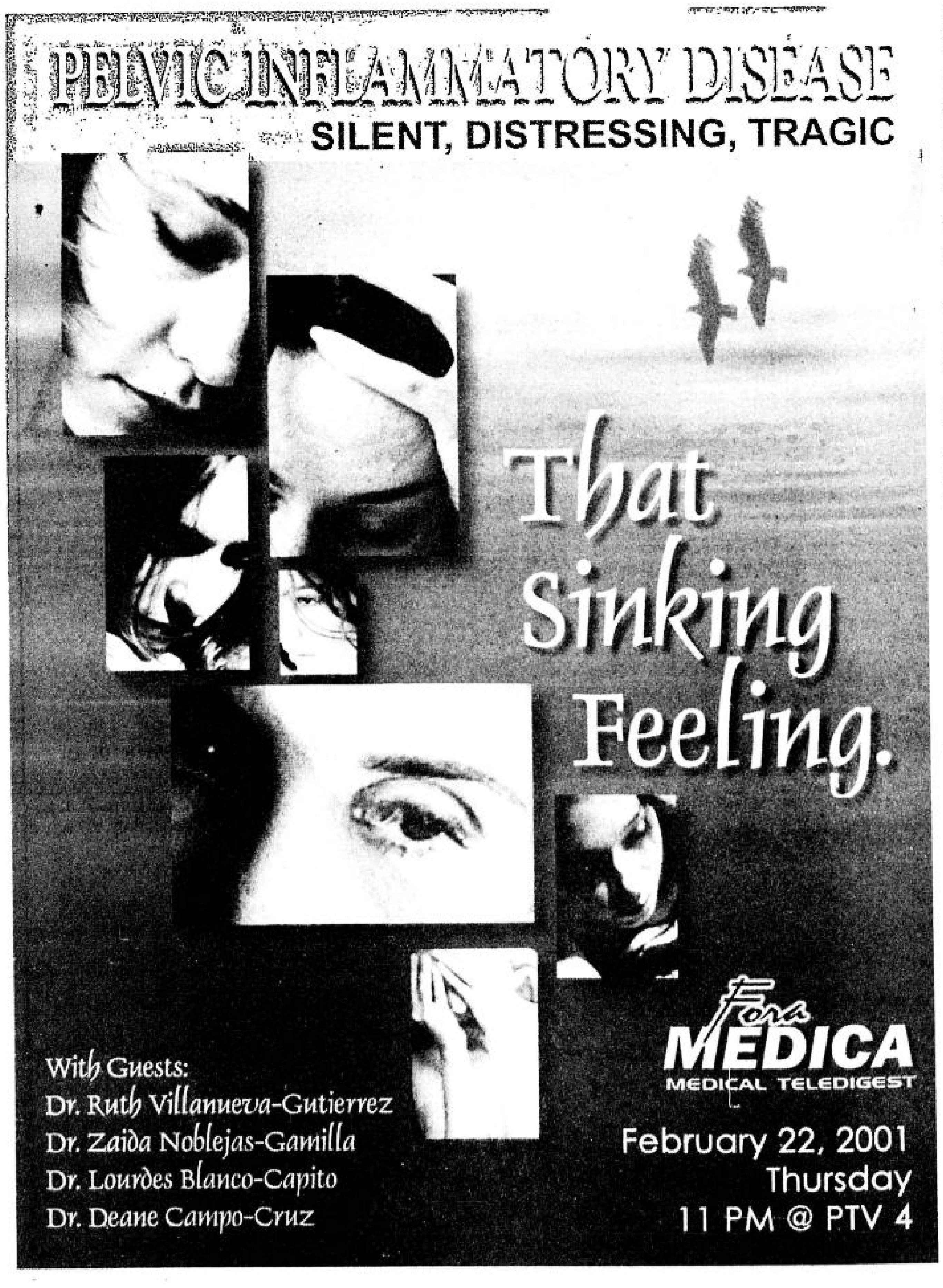
Manila Water Lost Receipts

Manila Water announced that Official Bill Receipts bearing serial no. 859201 to 859250 were inadvertently lost last February 16, 2001 along ROTC St., Barangay Rosario, Pasig City.

We are advising the public not to pay their water bills to unauthorized collectors and to check the receipt numbers before handing over their payments.

In case anybody finds these lost receipts, please call our Pasig Business Area office at 643-3805 and 643-3810 or our Customer Hotline at 1627.

February 22, 2001 – Inquirer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Search is on for top women

THE OUTSTANDING Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) Foundation will launch its first new millennium search for Filipino women whose exemplary achievements have helped shape the country and its people.

The launching of 2001 TOWNS Search on March 5 at the Yakal Room of the Dusit Hotel Nikko also coincides with a special recognition for seven members who have recently been in the news, including four appointees to the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

For the past 30 years, TOWNS had acknowledged the role of the Filipino women in the society as a dynamic, multi-faceted achiever, it said in a press statement.

"Without losing touch of the nurturing soft side of women, these TOWNS awardees have shown what it takes to be successful in their fields, which include, science, medicine, the arts, politics, government service, education, agriculture, business and communications," TOWNS said.

The TOWNS Search is a triennial event. The foundation invites nominations for Filipino women between ages 21 and 25 who have dedicated their skills, talents and creativity in their respective fields for the uplift of the country, their professions, families and the people.

Subic guards go on strike

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—At least 200 security and ground maintenance workers of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and its subsidiary, the Freeport Services Corp., rallied yesterday morning to protest alleged irregularities and unfair labor practices by their employers.

The workers also distributed copies of a petition to President Macapagal-Arroyo seeking the relief of SBMA chair Felicito Payumo and FSC president Manuel Aurelio whom they blamed for the irregularities.

Aurelio told reporters a few hours after the rally began that "security was partially compromised (at the freeport) because the ralliers were blocking entry to the area."

The FSC provides manpower, including security guards, to SBMA and the businesses located at the freeport.

Later in the afternoon, protesting employees were reported to have punched an employee of the SBMA media relations office identified as Anthony de Leon.

Details of the incident were sketchy, with some SBMA personnel claiming it was an Olongapo City public affairs office employee who slapped De Leon.*Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

7 cops to be arrested if they snub Dacer probe

BY DAVE VERIDIANO
AND MICHAEL LIM UBAC

THE SEVEN agents of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force allegedly implicated in the abduction of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer will be ordered arrested by their own chief if they do not submit themselves for investigation.

Yesterday, four more PAOCTF members were invited for questioning by the National Bureau of Investigation, bringing the number of members from the elite police force being investigated to 11.

Lest the agency be accused of engaging in a "fishing expedition," however, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco clarified yesterday that the 11 were not yet being considered as suspects.

"We are not saying that they are involved in the abduction," Wycoco said at a press conference yesterday.

But neither have they been cleared of any involvement in Dacer's abduction.

Not cleared

"We have not linked or cleared anybody," Wycoco said.

Director Hermogenes Ebdane, chief of the PAOCTF, said he has already sent word to the seven agents to fully cooperate with the NBI probe.

Ebdane's order was prompted by reports that the original seven agents invited for questioning by the NBI did not show up.

The NBI zeroed in on the seven PAOCTF agents after they were reportedly identified as members of a team that allegedly raided a house in the Sun Valley subdivision in Parañaque, not far from Dacer's house, about three days before the abduction.

The NBI investigators theorized that the raid may have been a cover for a monitoring center that the PAOCTF—then headed by Gen. Panfilo Lacson—had set up to spy on Dacer's movements and activities before his abduction.

Asked if the raid was being investigated separately from the Dacer probe, Wycoco said in Filipino: "They are all related."

Lacson's defense

Lacson defended his former subordinates, saying the PAOCTF "has nothing to do with the disappearance of Dacer."

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, Lacson said the raid was a legitimate police operation authorized by a search warrant issued by a "competent court."

He expressed apprehension that the Dacer case might be used "by unscrupulous elements in the administration to harass opposition candidates." Lacson is running for senator in the opposition coalition.

Wycoco, who was No. 2 in the PNP when Lacson was the PNP chief, said the information that the PAOCTF men were being linked to the Dacer abduction "did not come from me."

He said it was Samuel Ong, NBI Metro Manila chief, who had invited the 11 PAOCTF men for questioning for conducting a raid on the abandoned house on No. 3934 Marigold Street in Sun Valley, which was only a few houses away from Dacer's.

Wycoco said the raid was indeed covered by a search warrant, purportedly to arrest suspected carnappers, issued by Judge Diosdado M. Peralta of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 95.

The PAOCTF operatives seized a car plate number, a firearm, 10 gms of shabu and drug paraphernalia from the residence, according to Wycoco.

Negative

One of the barangay officials who witnessed the search had been furnished a copy of the inventory sheet.

"However, when the search warrant was returned, the operatives declared that the search yielded negative results," Wycoco said.

This was why the NBI summoned the PAOCTF members to answer charges of willful suppression of evidence, according to Wycoco.

He said the 11 policemen were facing investigation of obstruction of justice; violation of Presidential Decree 3019 (graft) and Republic Act 6425 (Dangerous Drugs Act of 1972); and malversation of public funds.

Ong identified the seven earlier summoned by the NBI as P/Insp. Wilson Pedido, P/Insp. Dionisio Bonoy, SPO1 Adelaido Celarco Jr., SPO2 Gomercito Cagnayo, PO3 Edmund Gacuti, PO3 Roco Matic and SPO4 Willy Nuas.

All of them were detailed with the PAOCTF Task Force Luzon, which is under the supervision of P/Sr. Supt. Cesar Mancao.

The other four were not identified.

Former COA chief resurrected

BY DONNA S. CUETO

A forgotten bureaucrat, whose office was largely ignored by ousted President Joseph Estrada, has been rescued by presidential fiat and given a key role in the Macapagal administration's good governance plank.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced yesterday that she was not only retaining Eufemio Domingo as head of the Presidential Commission Against Graft and Corruption, the agency that was created by former President Ramos in 1994 and abolished by Estrada last year.

The President said she would also be taking Domingo out of obscurity and giving him the task of screening presidential appointees to make sure that they have no history of graft.

Domingo will also be tasked with designing an anti-corruption program to be funded by the World Bank through its investment arm, the International Finance Corp.

The President noted that Domingo, a former chair of the Commission on Audit, and his agency had been largely ignored by Estrada.

"(Estrada) only called (Domingo) once, only to be told to explain why he was investigating the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.," Ms Macapagal said.

But now Domingo would be an "active member of this administration both in terms of investigating presidential appointees and working out systems for the prevention of graft," she said.

"I (told him) he is now in this administration. Do investigate and we will look very carefully, closely and openly at your recommendations," she said yesterday.

The President said she would ask Domingo to "resubmit" the cases of presidential appointees in the Estrada administration whom he had investigated.

Presidential spokesperson Renato Corona said that there were around 100 such presidential appointees with cases and who were recommended for administrative action, the gravest of which was dismissal.

He said the cases could still be referred to the Office of the Ombudsman for the proper action.

Corona said the President would soon issue an order reinstating the PCAGC which Estrada abolished in July last year and replaced with the National Anti-Corruption Commission to carry out his purportedly renewed fight against graft and corruption.

But the PCAGC could not be closed down as Estrada was never able to get the NACC off the ground.

Estrada had wanted the NACC to be chaired by the feisty former elections commissioner Haydee Yorac, but the latter declined.

The NACC remained an empty shell of an agency until Estrada was ousted from power last month.

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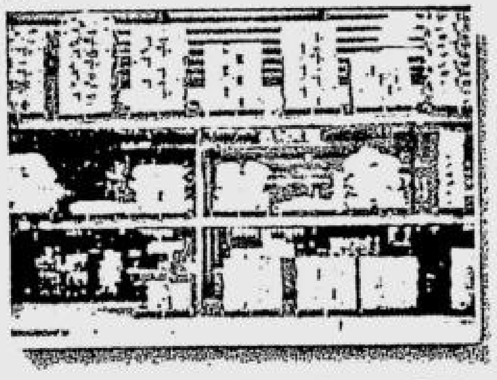

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OPINION

e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inquirer.net

EUGENIA D. APOSTOL
Founding Chairman

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EDITORIALS

He who gets dizzy…

A READING of Conrado Limcaoco's personal narrative of events that made up People Power II cannot but lead to the question of what would have happened had the march of the anti-Estrada forces on Malacañang been allowed to push through **as planned**. Midway into the feverish period of protest at Edsa and various points nationwide, members of the broad alliance calling for the resignation and ouster of Joseph Estrada had announced the "March for Truth and Justice," a clear declaration that the people were bent on pushing the national outrage to its logical conclusion.

The people were ready, willing and able. Thursday, Jan. 18, organizers were said to have their hands full taking calls from groups in Northern Luzon, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog. They wanted to participate. They wanted to be counted in their numbers. But they needed time to get to the assembly point, which was why the appointed day had to be rescheduled.

One million was the target. Asked where the numbers would come from, then Laguna Gov. Joey Lina, chair of the Kangkong Brigade, declared: "We are inspired by the swelling of the crowd (at Edsa). There is enough reason for the public to be outraged." And indeed there was.

Imagine it, if you will: a river of people bearing banners and streamers and galvanized by the force of purpose, flowing down the 15-kilometer route from the Edsa Shrine to Mendiola near Malacañang, and drawing still others in its wake. Both as symbolic gesture and act of determination, the march would not only have reclaimed the "hallowed ground" of Mendiola from the state and its pathetic paid hacks but also displayed the length and breadth of the people's anger and will to take their destiny in their own hands.

It would have been the "perfect storm"—perhaps Rene Saguisag's most vivid nightmare: the mother of all hooting crowds. But who knows how the disgraced tenant of the Palace would have reacted?

Who knows but that—faced by this implacable force thundering "Erap, resign!"—the southpaw would have been moved to sign, not another document opening yet another secret bank account, but a letter stating his resignation from the presidency in terms even Saguisag, his counsel and supposed latter-day wordsmith, would pronounce unambiguous?

Who knows but that there would have been no use for all the wheeling and dealing that appear to have taken place in Malacañang in the dead of Friday night, Jan. 19? (The jury is still out on that one. There can be as many accounts as there were insiders present in those fateful hours.)

…Is lost

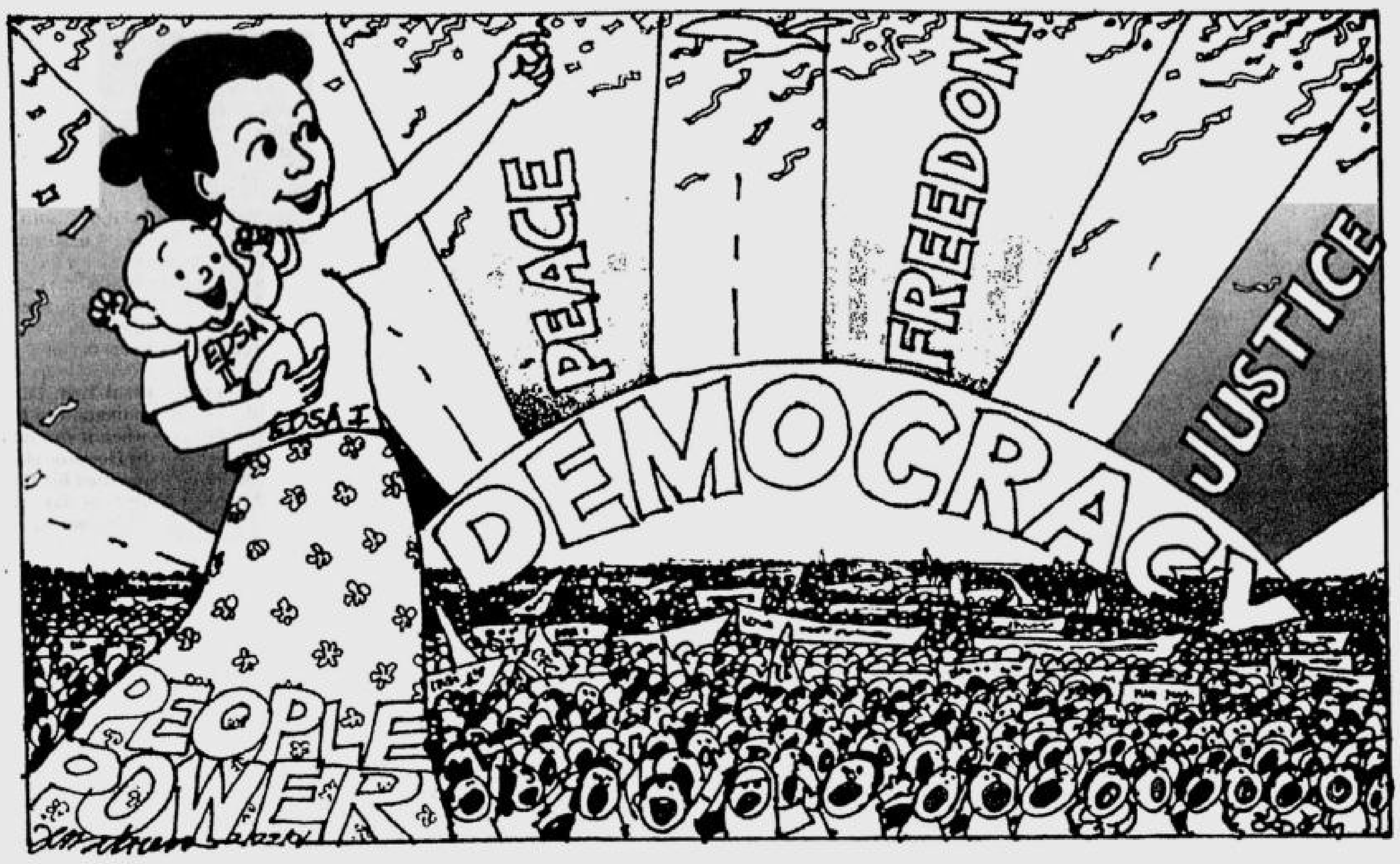
BUT no. Conrado Limcaoco writes that while the proponents of the march wanted it launched Thursday or Friday, certain civil groups and the Catholic Church posed resistance, citing the risk of "unnecessary violence" among other factors. ("Unnecessary violence"? This fear was doubtless directed at the Left, which not only provided the necessary warm bodies as imparted direction and discipline in the struggle. As though the violence posed by the state were not reprehensible enough.)

Even when the march did push through early Saturday, Jan. 20—attended in large numbers by the youth, truly the hope of the motherland—the resistance to it was great, as shown by calls from Church leaders aired on radio for the faithful not to proceed to Mendiola.

Observers attentive to the imperatives of battle would agree that it was a profoundly frustrating moment. In the brisk momentum of struggle, a moment's hesitation can undo and thereafter render useless significant gains. (How did Arthur Koestler put it? "The air is thin. He who gets dizzy is lost.") With unequivocal support for the march withheld, the people's initiative was dulled, their lead role in the efforts to remove Joseph Estrada from office laid open to question by charlatans and credit-grabbers.

The effects of this error cannot be gainsaid, no matter that the man has moved bag and baggage out of his fiefdom. Certain factions in the military are now impudently demanding concessions for their supposed key role in the struggle, as is evident in President Macapagal's continuous expressions of gratitude. We are now trapped in the silken skeins of Saguisag's legal histrionics.

And the man is gaining leeway by the day—another case of déjà vu in the unhappy story of our lives.



Defense secretary should be a civilian

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should not appoint retiring AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes as the new defense secretary, not because he is not deserving but because the position should properly go to a civilian. While there is no law that says retired military officers should not be elevated to defense secretary, nevertheless common sense and tradition dictate this. True, former AFP chiefs of staff like Generals Ernesto Mata, Renato de Villa (whose best-known achievement is the Camp Cawa-Cawa massacre) and, if I am not mistaken, Fidel V. Ramos, were named defense secretaries, they were exceptions to the rule. A civilian in the top defense post is necessary to emphasize civilian supremacy over the military. Having military officers running the defense establishment from the defense secretary to the foot soldier at the bottom is dangerous. They would all be thinking alike. And the esprit d'corps among them will tend to make them cover up the mistakes of others.

The best defense secretaries we had were civilians. The best of them all was Ramon Magsaysay, who was so good the people made him president (he is still remembered as the best-loved president up to this day). Magsaysay, a former congressman, was appointed defense secretary by President Elpidio Quirino at the height of the Hukbalahap uprising. He quelled the rebellion with a successful pacification campaign that started the development of Mindanao by shipping willing ex-Huks to resettle on free land on the undeveloped island. Those ex-Huks are now among the solid citizens of the provinces where they settled.

If General Reyes should be rewarded for defecting to Ms Macapagal and hastening the fall of Joseph Estrada, he can be given another assignment. But did he defect because he was expecting a reward or because it was for the good of the nation?

Besides, the AFP retirement system was devised precisely to allow military officers to rest comfortably as a reward for their service to the nation and to allow the junior officers to climb up the ranks. They can live comfortably on their retirement pay and enjoy life playing golf and taking care of their grandchildren. They don't need other jobs. If they have to keep themselves busy, there are scores of NGOs and causes that need their services.

By staying on government jobs too long, they only prevent, unfairly, the younger officers and civilians from getting to their own places in the sun.

* * *

President Macapagal is also having a hard time choosing her people to head the Department of Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. And it is well that she is being careful and taking her time about it. One of her rules should be: Any candidate to a position who actively seeks it should not get the job because he must have a very powerful (and possibly questionable?) reason for wanting it. Why would anybody, if he is any good at all, want a very demanding job, in which he risks criticism, ingratitude and even criminal charges every day, but which pays very little legally? Common sense says it is because he wants to get rich illegally as others have done before him, the prime example being Joseph Estrada himself. And look what happened to him. Ms Macapagal should tell her search committee to check the backgrounds of candidates deeper and more thoroughly.

One of the aspirants to the DOE is former Rep. Dante Tinga of Taguig, who was chair of the House energy committee when the two oil deregulation laws were passed. These are the laws that now allow the oil cartel to raise prices at will, bringing untold hardships to Filipino consumers.

Tinga asked for a meeting to comment on two columns I wrote the last two days arguing against his appointment because of his record in the enactment of the oil deregulation laws. But it turns out that the others on the short list of candidates are even worse than Tinga. They all have vested interests in and connections to oil and power companies.

Tinga said he is against the Omnibus Power Bill as presently worded in the version being pushed through the bicameral conference committee. He also said he is amenable to an oil exchange law if it would finally end the rapacity of the local oil cartel.

* * *

This column got a lot of reactions from Chinese-Filipinos about the derisive comments of Ms Macapagal's chief of staff ,Renato Corona, when the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce paid a courtesy call on the President in Malacañang. (PDI, 2/9/01) If you will remember, Corona even mimicked the pidgin Tagalog of Chinese-Filipino businessmen. This is not politically correct.

I got not only phone calls but a faxed letter from Sonny G. Co, spokesperson of World Against Racism Movement. Here it is:

"The spokesperson of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Atty. Renato Corona, in one of his interviews on national television, openly displayed his racial prejudice against the Filipino-Chinese by mimicking and by making fun of the way some Filipino-Chinese speak broken Tagalog.

"It seems that the action of Atty. Renato Corona was his way of getting back at the entire Filipino-Chinese community just because a scant few of its members were implicated in the charges against former President Joseph Estrada.

"This kind of behavior coming no less from a newly appointed presidential spokesperson of a few days old administration is uncalled for and does not augur well for a government whose avowed objectives of healing a divided nation and of rebuilding a shattered economy were spelled out in the inaugural speech of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"May we then call the attention of Atty. Renato Corona to be more responsible and circumspect in his utterances in deference to the cultural sensitivities of the ethnic Chinese (aptly called 'Huaren'), who by mere qualifications are also Filipinos by constitutional fiat. Like any Filipino, they are also entitled to equal rights and protection as provided for by the Philippine Constitution.

"We therefore ask him not to judge the Filipino-Chinese community on the basis of the actions made by a few of its members but on the basis of the positive contributions to the goals of our country's economic development made by its greater majority."

Of new cars and crooked streets

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

NEW administrations are like new cars; they smell good. In the beginning, everything works. Everyone says they're much better looking and drive better than the previous model. If they aren't quite perfect, a minor adjustment at the dealers or of the front seat fixes it up fine. With luck, the serious problems won't get noticed until after two or three years when a cosmetic job might hide them.

Sometimes, they're as new as the "all-new Camry" is: a fine car which is principally distinguishable from the previous "old" Camry only in that it now has cupholders in the rear seat. A politician is really just a car salesman, except only that he makes more money.

The trick in government as in car ownership is in preventive maintenance. Don't try to do things it wasn't designed to do. Don't overload it beyond its planned carrying weight. Check it from time to time. And when something breaks down, replace it. Minor adjustments early on save the vehicle owner much grief and expense. Too often, by the time the rot is discovered, it is already much too late to do anything about it.

As usual this, or any administration, need not worry about its enemies, the repeated front-page stories of uncovered plots here and there notwithstanding. Despite the ceaseless political controversy, which is mother's milk to the Filipino, people wish the new administration well because they want peace and prosperity and want to give it a chance to provide these. There has also been catharsis with Edsa II, and it will take a whole lot to stir people up again.

"Friends" are always the problem. Especially the variety which is in business. This problem has haunted, to a greater or lesser degree, every Philippine administration, most controversially the last one.

The essential question is the character of the chief executive. A clever but dishonest president who acts with relative "moderation" can secretly and effectively amass great wealth. Think of how different history might have been if those notorious and incendiary mansions had never been built, or if deposits had been made abroad in foreign banks and not here.

How to elect honest and competent presidents is an art we have not yet mastered. Without this basic ingredient, Edsa II or future prosecutions may end up becoming not lessons in being honest but simply one about being careful. There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy.

The long-term solution is education and prosperity. These presumably produce wiser voters. But since in the long run we are all dead, an intermediate solution might encompass both relying on our rambunctious media as well as considering constitutional changes. These can range from increasing the qualifications for president, Singapore-style, to proposing a shift to a parliamentary system. At the moment, however, there is more distaste for the problem than enthusiasm for a solution.

Relatives and friends are easier to banish in law than they are in fact. Custom is more powerful than law. The only solution here is the spotlight. It was the anonymity of Mark Jimenez early in the previous administration that permitted him to make deals.

That became progressively more difficult as he got more attention. Once the jokes started going around ("Why did they rename Kennon Road Mark Jimenez Road? Because it is the crookedest street in the country."), it was the beginning of the end. In the end, Jaime Cardinal Sin did not so much go to Kennon Road as Kennon Road came over to visit Cardinal Sin.

The more subtle situations are the most difficult. Even those with the purest of intentions can end up suspect. It can be both a help and a hindrance that "civil society" is an active supporter of government. But its participation in vetting appointees can also cause a real or perceived conflict of interest later on.

For instance, the appointment of executives identified with Ayala is probably a genuine profession of help and patriotism. However, it may be perceived in an entirely different light later when Ayala—involved in banking, real estate, car sales, computers, water distribution, telecommunications, insurance, and so forth—makes a bid or proposal for something.

To show us how dangerous this is, there is already talk, no doubt unfair, that ethnic Chinese friends have been replaced by *mestizos* again. The President and all those who support her need to be aware of the danger of these potential perceptions. Improperly handled, these will not help her, the country, or for that matter, the business groups concerned. Sanctimony exacts a high price. Like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel, what goes around comes around.

Corruption is most dangerous in the operational and regulatory level: the commissions, bureaus, offices, regulatory boards. It is there, not at Cabinet level, where operational decisions are firmed up and exchanges quietly made. A subcontract here. An overprice there. A subtle regulation change everywhere. A complaint allowed to sleep. A blind eye with 20-20 vision. In some ways, these appointments are collectively more important than the Cabinet. And once made, any president finds it difficult in practice to replace incumbents. The President now therefore faces both a rare opportunity and a grave risk.

For the moment, words of caution suffice. The administration has not been fully staffed. Every opportunity needs to be given to help it succeed, even beyond the traditional honeymoon period. Being human, it will have its share of mistakes, blunders, and even scandals.

It cannot please everyone: to govern is to choose. Not to choose is to abdicate governing. It cannot solve in six months the collected misgovernance of generations. And it will be far easier to pass laws than it will be to reshape the national character. Public goodwill is a vital but exhaustible commodity.

Yet the only way ahead is to begin. But look out for those potholes and hairpin turns.

How could it have been 'mob rule'?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada, echoing the opinion of a sector of the Western press about People Power II, wrote in the Feb. 19 issue of Time magazine that if the political "lynching" could happen to him, who was safe from mob rule? He followed it with a warning to his successor to watch out or else she too would be ousted by people power. That article, by the way, was ghost-written by Estrada's lawyer, Rene Saguisag, according to Time sources.

The impression that Estrada's article and those written by a couple of foreign writers gave was that people power was equivalent to "mob rule" that could be summoned against anyone who has been arbitrarily judged to have wronged the people. What that argument ignores is that people power of the "convincing kind," such as was demonstrated in Edsa I and II, is not easy to mount. Estrada himself tried to summon people power for himself during the days of the impeachment trial, but despite the P9 million to P12 million his camp was reportedly spending daily to bus and feed people at the Senate grounds, they couldn't gather a convincing number. What they could muster was the usual "*hakot*" crowd reminiscent of the Marcos era.

* * *

What the Western press couldn't see largely because of "parachute journalism" and what Estrada refuses to understand is that in both Edsa events, the most respected institutions came out to lead the people in demanding Estrada's ouster. Led by these venerable institutions, the people showed up in the tens of thousands, endured fatigue and hunger and ignored the demands of nature to express their sovereign will at Edsa. These institutions included the various churches, led by the Roman Catholic Church; the business community, represented by about 20 of the most distinguished professional organizations; and the leading educational institutions such as UST, Ateneo, De La Salle, St. Scholastica and some colleges of the University of the Philippines. Eventually they were joined by the majority of legislators who formalized the impeachment of Estrada. The military, feeling the people's pulse, withdrew support from its disgraced commander in chief and offered it to his constitutional successor. Ultimately the members of the Supreme Court unanimously affirmed the legitimacy of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption of office.

* * *

These institutions hardly constitute "mob rule." They represent the "thinking" constituency, who cannot be hoodwinked by falsehood. What united them over the months since last October was their desire to end what Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. described as "misgovernance of alarming proportions."

Will there be a People Power III? It certainly can happen, but as President Macapagal put it, she would "deserve" to be ousted by people power, "if I plunder the economy." But I concede that all of us citizens have to work hard to prevent the exercise of people power from becoming a habit.

* * *

Among the special awardees at the annual Aurora Aragon Quezon Peace Awards last Monday were the students at Edsa II. The students deserve that recognition for they constituted the bulk of the multitudes at Edsa II. Fashion czar Pitoy Moreno, who was among the thousands who kept returning to Edsa in those days, spent a lot of time chatting with the youngsters there. He realized that the reason the students were all there was that they had missed the action during Edsa I, since they were 3, 4 or 5 years old then. This time, they wanted to live to tell their grandchildren about Edsa II.

* * *

Namfrel chair Joe Concepcion couldn't hold back his tears as he pleaded that the citizens' watchdog be allowed to do a quick count in the May 2001 elections, as it has been doing over the past 40 years. The Comelec en banc heard the arguments of both Namfrel and the National Press Club, which are both seeking accreditation to do a quick count. Under the law only one citizens' group can be accredited. JoeCon argued that the NPC is not equipped to handle a nationwide quick count whereas Namfrel is organized. But Namfrel's bid is being blocked by Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco, who hasn't bothered to hide her disdain for this group. The feeling is definitely mutual, but Tancangco is said to be supported by two other commissioners in the seven-member poll body. Namfrel is hoping it can swing the fourth commissioner appointed during Estrada's time.

* * *

Tancangco's obstinate objection to Namfrel gives rise to fears that her faction is still on a cheating mode for the deposed administration. This is only one of the problems inherited by new Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo, whom I congratulated for his bravery in taking that job. His wife, the former Rowena Castro, daughter of the late Chief Justice Fred Ruiz Castro, is a good friend of mine from UP days. I understand Benipayo's family didn't want him to accept the job, and I don't blame them. Fred, who was Supreme Court administrator, was due to be appointed as a justice of the high court. But duty called and he couldn't say no to some people who urged him to accept the job.

* * *

I must salute, too, former Rizal Rep. Ding Tanjuatco, who asked that his nomination to the top Comelec post be withdrawn when it ran into controversy. Ding, whose work in the House on electoral reforms makes him highly qualified for that job, said that each day that passes is "one day that a leaderless Comelec has to struggle in gearing up for a very important electoral exercise." But he said he would remain a staunch advocate of electoral reforms in another capacity.

* * *

A few weeks back, I wrote that while former Mayor Jesse Robredo of Naga City was qualified for the top post at the Department of Interior and Local Government, I felt that Laguna Gov. Joey Lina ought to get it because, apart from his long experience in local government, he was so deeply involved in Edsa II. By contrast, I asked, where was Robredo?

A Naga citizen named Jose Perez wrote to point out that as early as last Oct. 20, Robredo, together with Ateneo de Naga president Joel Tabora and Mayor Sulpicio Roco Jr., led Nagueños in a rally at Plaza Quezon to call for Estrada's resignation. This was the first rally against Erap ever held in Southern Luzon. It was followed by a series of rallies, the biggest of which was held on Jan. 17, 2001, where Robredo was the most impassioned speaker against Erap and the 11 "notorious" senators, according to Perez. Unfortunately, said Perez, the Naga rallies didn't get coverage from the Manila media.

With Laarni back, what now Loi?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IF Doktora Loi needs another reason to abandon her pathetic senatorial campaign, then the dramatic, cinematic "return" of La Laarni is it. What did her ingrate of a husband say of his life now? That he's under "housewife arrest"? Well, he's about to make parole.

Was it because he foresaw Doktora Loi's frequent and extended absences from Polk Street that Erap sought more company? Was it to seek comfort on cold nights that he summoned his "favorite mistress" even if she faces charges of estafa and even plunder? Or was it her signature that he needed, to withdraw the last of the remaining millions in her numerous accounts?

Say what you will about the Pompadoured One, but you must concede his power to win the undying loyalty of the women in his life. There's the former first lady painfully struggling against her own shyness to scamper about a campaign stage. There's Laarni, sneaking through the immigration and customs line to go back to the country which she fled in haste just over a month ago. First Mistress Guia Estrada has been laid low by a serious ailment, but she faithfully sends out her son JV to defend his dad, as well as to fight to preserve the family's stranglehold on San Juan.

If only Erap were half as faithful to his people, as his women are to him!

* * *

ANOTHER reason Doktora Loi might consider abandoning her Senate run is that it's only a matter of time before people remembered that she isn't exactly an innocent party in the Erap Shenanigans Revue.

Isn't she a major stockholder in JELP, the construction and real estate firm that hurriedly built luxury homes in Antipolo without bothering to get even the most basic of permits? Though nobody was able to prove she used millions in PCSO funds for her own benefit, wasn't it clear that regulations were violated when these funds were channeled to her projects without the necessary review? And she may have gotten nothing more costly than a video camera from Chavit Singson, as she claimed, but still, wasn't that benefiting from illegal gambling proceeds?

Quit while you're ahead, Doktora Loi. Quit while your "sainthood" is still intact.

* * *

IT was Chari Bagatsing's birthday but what the heck, the campaign season is just around the corner. So it was that she spent almost an hour waiting for this columnist, held up in another function, fortunately just a few blocks away.

My late arrival, though, was a blessing in disguise, for, fearing I had forgotten all about our appointment, she had called her husband Amado to join her. Being her birthday, he had no choice but to obey the summons. "I am all hers today," he declared.

And after all, it was on his behalf that Chari had set the meeting. The story of how Amado Bagatsing got roped into contesting the Manila mayoralty for the People Power Coalition had already been told by another columnist, but Chari felt her husband was made to look too much like the underdog. And as far as the Bagatsing couple is concerned, when it comes to Manila politics, they are far from being the underdogs.

Indeed, astute observers of the Manila mayoralty race in 1998 were saying that the contest had boiled down to Bagatsing, a last-term congressman from Manila (whose father was, of course, a former mayor), and Ernie Maceda, a last-term senator who began his political career in the city and whose son was a city councilor. Nobody was placing bets on Vice Mayor Lito Atienza, who was just moving out of Mayor Fred Lim's shadow. But after the balloting, surprise, surprise, who would end up as mayor but Atienza? This, even if Bagatsing's running mate won as vice mayor and Erap, whom Bagatsing supported, came out first among Manila voters, beating even Lim, who had waged his own presidential campaign. "The results defied all logic," is all the white-haired Bagatsing cares to say today.

* * *

THIS year's elections should prove even more daunting, what with both Atienza and Lim slugging it out. But Bagatsing says he's confident that the two will not only cancel each other out, but will be soundly rejected by Manilans. "Atienza stuck like glue to Erap and even sent out goons against the protesters, while Lim turned *balimbing* and abandoned Erap, but it was too late."

Though an early supporter of the discredited former president, Bagatsing says he saw the light early on, after Peping Cojuangco made him listen to Singson's exposé. Even though he knew Erap still enjoyed considerable support among Manila residents, especially the urban poor, Bagatsing decided to join the Erap resign movement. This may explain why he had abandoned all plans to run for mayor, even if he was itching to get back at the man he believed stole the '98 polls from him.

But then opposition leaders were desperate for a mayoralty candidate in Manila. "We were being goaded, for commentators were asking why, if the anti-Erap movement was so popular, we couldn't even put up anyone to fight Atienza and Lim, who are both pro-Erap," Bagatsing remembers. So it was that, at a time when the chances of an anti-Erap candidate winning in Manila looked about equal to the chances of a conviction at the impeachment trial, Bagatsing, against his better judgment and personal preferences, held his breath and jumped into the electoral fray.

Then People Power II happened, and suddenly the world turned. Suddenly, too, other Manila pols were interested in Bagatsing's once-shunned "title" as the opposition standard-bearer.

If he's worried that the PPC nomination might still be snatched from him, Bagatsing wasn't showing it. The day after our lunch, Chari excitedly called to relay the news that when President Macapagal espied her husband the night before, she greeted him: "Hello, Mr. Mayor." From such flimsy signals are "anointments" made.

Chicken soup is not for everyone

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

AS I said last week, I received letters responding positively to that front-page Sunday piece on "Billy and Lou." But I did get a tongue-lashing from an INQUIRER reader in Saudi Arabia who thought it was all wrong. I recognize his point except that Billy and Lou's *lugaw* is the wrong target. Portions of that e-mailed letter from Alvaro Bernal:

"We at Saudi Arabia read with dismay your account in today's PDI (2/11/01) of Billy and Lou's purported 'welfare' on Quezon City's street children. This is one story we prefer not to see in print for the ff. reasons:

"First and foremost, we are not against welfare. (Don't we practice welfare ourselves by providing rice and fish to our own families, our brothers' families, our sisters' families and other kamag-anaks?). But what Billy and Lou are doing is something else: they are perpetuating poverty on a grand scale whose victims are no other than these street children.

"Sure the street children need care. And welfare. But the care and welfare should be in such a way that they eventually learn to stand on their own. Remember the biblical tenets, 'Give a man a fish and he will have food for a day, but TEACH HIM HOW TO FISH and he will have fish the rest of his life?'...

"The Catholic Church practices the same—giving dole-outs, hand-outs and the like—in its desperate attempt to discourage religious devotees from 'waking up' from their lifetime exploitation. Need we mention Mother Teresa and her exploits among Calcutta's poor?

"Instead of spending their money on an empty gesture of welfare, what we OCWs in Saudi Arabia suggest is for Billy and Lou to sponsor educational scholarships for these street children. No doubt, education will teach them how to catch fish during their whole lifetime—not just on lousy weekends.

"And there's no need for Billy and Lou to tell us to put our money where our mouths are. Need we describe the hardships and difficulties we suffer by being away from our families for years? And what about the supreme sacrifices we make just to ensure that our families back home have a roof over their heads, food in their mouths and clothes on their backs? Are we not the so-called 'modern-day heroes' because we keep the Philippine economy above water with our annual billion-dollar remittances (but whose benefits only redound to the corrupt bureaucracy)? Sure, we don't feed street children—but that's because we are tired of being branded by the outside world as nothing less than a bunch of indolent, hopeless and pathetic people.

"This is the message from the OCWs of Saudi Arabia."

Like you, Mr. Bernal, I frown on dole-outs and I am not a fan of those who, in the name of charity, perpetuate dependency. Billy and Lou are not the bleeding-heart Mother Teresa types. They're UP guys exposed to activism, but for now, feeding around 40 poor children on Sundays is all they could afford. They can't do full-time development work or give scholarships. They give **time and presence.**

Billy and Lou did not want to be identified or written about, and now I see why. They weren't trying to make a big statement. *Nagpapamerienda lang, kung baga.* I was not holding it up as the grand model to curb malnutrition and poverty. If everyone did exactly the same, I'd be worried and sick.

Billy and Lou never said people should put their money where their mouths are. You over-read. You mention the Bible. Christ taught his men to fish, but he also fed thousands, many of whom were ingrates.

I've been exposed to development projects and I've seen continuous dependency in a grand scale—dependency on big foreign funding, etc. Billions of dollars have been poured in but many still don't know how to fish. Maybe there is one ingredient that is lacking. I won't say what it is.

Readers responded positively to the story because it showed them that each one could have a way—serving a bowl of hot soup, sending one child to school, lending P2,000 to a vegetable grower or a seamstress who needs a new sewing machine, etc.

Many wanted to help Billy and Lou, and I was a bit concerned. The idea, if you ask me, is not to simply dig into one's pocket but for people to find other creative ways. But that readers were inspired is, I think, a beginning.

I've seen individuals quietly doing their bit for this world. Some are into micro-lending (an alternative to the usurious "5-6" lending rate) or have put up cooperatives for OCWs' wives. I know a group that reads stories to poor children and makes them love books, an heiress who gave her land to farmers, a landlord who took the side of tenants, a man working among the tribes. More on them next week.

Billy and Lou aren't the garden-variety do-gooders who simply want to feel great about themselves. But if even just one kid experienced the warmth that went into that chicken soup and then spread that to others (maybe someday) that would be a good start.

I do salute you, the OCWs who are hurting. You were the INQUIRER's "Filipinos of the Year" some years ago. For that I wrote the accompanying unbylined essay, every bleeding word of it. Excerpts to comfort you:

"The country owes the OCWs a debt of gratitude, never mind if the rest of the world that has profited from their labors oftentimes mock their servility and lowliness. Filipino OCWs have contributed to and left their mark in countries that have treated them both badly and well. How lucky can the world get.

"As the Philippines braces itself for the third millennium it is hoped that things would get better at home, and result in the steady stream of returning OCWs. What redder carpet to lay out before them than a nation that has risen to its feet, waiting to say to the last of them: Welcome home.

"As Homer wrote in 'The Odyssey': 'You see, then, he is alive and well, and headed homeward now, no more to be abroad far from his island, his dear wife and son.'"

When this piece comes out, I would be in Bangkok for a journalism workshop on women OCWs. Mr. Bernal, we care about you out there. You have not been forgotten.

Obsolete thoughts

Tin Sanchez

YOUNGBLOOD

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

THE OTHER day I found myself staring at Erap's eerie signature on a P100 bill. I gave it a close inspection, as if I were searching for some evidence of his guilt in his penmanship or some in those loops and arcs. And it seemed to wink at me, that cursed scribble. That signature of an ousted president. His forsaken name on my hard-earned money.

Then I realized that I really wouldn't find any answers there. I sighed in relief that while the man whose signature was on the bill had become obsolete, my P100 could still buy a McChicken meal at McDonald's. A fast-food lunch for a piece of history.

In my apathy-filled life, I have never been more eager to read the morning paper than I was in the 1,000 days or so that Erap was in power. Every day I would wake up, catch the newspaper headlines while being caught in traffic or walking on the street, and see what stupid thing he had done again. It was free solid political entertainment coming for breakfast. It was yummy.

If I wanted to get the details—more "bacon bits" for my morning repast—I would buy the newspaper for a little over P10, feed something in my higher, superior self until it was filled up, and burp loudly and rudely in my thoughts. Each time Erap committed a blunder, I added points to my laugh-at Erap-and-his-supporters scoreboard.

The Monday morning after the poor guy was ousted from the presidency, I took a taxi on my way to work. As fate would have it, the driver was one of his very sorry supporters. I had some free solid political entertainment for breakfast. And that time I got it first-hand.

"*Akala ko ipinanganak na ang magpapabago sa Pilipinas, 'yun pala, kurakot din tulad ng iba* (I thought the man who would reform Philippine society was here, but he turned out to be just another crook)," he complained bitterly.

I suppressed the urged to laugh at him, and just kept quiet. I wanted to scream at him, "*Kayo kasi...Ayan tuloy*!" But I was very pleased by what he said. I took great pleasure in his regret. And as he continued his song of despair, and sang a duet of angst with some AM radio announcers, my mind wandered off the traffic and into a dramatic MTV-like slow-mo of Edsa II.

Back to reality two weeks after the second People Power Revolution. The Western media were worried that Filipinos had developed the bad habit of ousting presidents.

Come again?

Still it was not unexpected. Westerners have this habit of regarding other races as nothing more than children. In this particular instance, they reminded me of a tight-lipped schoolmarm nodding her gray head in disapproval at a teenager who partied the whole night.

We had fun—and Edsa II was one hell of a party all right—and they were killjoys who acted like they had been there and they were saying they knew better.

Truth is, they don't. Our history, albeit closely influenced by Western colonialism, is not like theirs. The simple truth is that you never know something very well until you have experienced it. So no matter what they say about it, Edsa II is something that I will always remember with deep patriotic pride. A leader whose character is consumed by all the seven deadly sins, and who shamed the nation so thoroughly deserves to be stripped of power. It is that simple.

The only thing Erap was good at was giving us a good topic of conversation over lunch. For years, he was the favorite topic on such occasions. He should have been careful.

To upset thousands of weary and hungry people in this scorching weather is a very dangerous thing.

Ousting presidents by revolution is not a bad national habit. I would say it is a unique national talent. Very Filipino. Distinctly Pinoy. But like we always say, when you have talent, envy is sure to butt in.

I stick my tongue out to the Western media. And with absolute "immaturity," I will do it again if I have to.

Writing this essay makes me smile. The topic is obsolete, and my thoughts are incoherent. But then so is Erap.

Tin Sanchez, 22, works as a copywriter in a direct marketing agency in Makati City.

Judases

Lazaro N. Ervite

"Jesus and Judas are movements of a single dance."
—Anthony de Melo, S.J.

THE INDISPENSABILITY of Judas' role in salvation history has been overlooked. All that Judas receives is condemnation.

Likewise, the 11 senators who blocked the opening of the second enveloped sent by Equitable PCI Bank, to save then President Estrada from conviction, have been mocked by the Filipinos. They are destined to go down in history as villains of the People Power II Revolution. They will surely assume Judas' role in our history.

If one, however, goes deeper into the particularities of salvation history, he will realize that Judas was as indispensable as Jesus in carrying out God's plan to save humankind. Similarly, the 11 senators were as important as the 10 senators and the organizers of mass mobilizations in bringing about the success of the Edsa II revolution. Had it not been for the 11 senators who jeopardized the national interest for their own personal gain, the impeachment trial would have continued, plunging the economy into a deep recession and the nation into chaos. Had it not been for their blind loyalty to President Estrada, people would still have kept their trust in the Senate as an impeachment court and they would not have pronounced Estrada guilty on Edsa.

Sen. Francisco Tatad's maneuver to force a vote, which was immediately seconded by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, reminded the Filipinos of the time he read the proclamation putting the whole country under martial law. The injustices and plunder of Marcos and his cronies during the martial law years came back to haunt the Filipinos, triggering their outrage. And when Sen. Teresita Aquino-Oreta danced while citizens mourned the failure of the impeachment process, this further inflamed their anger.

The betrayal by the 11 senators did not only hurt the Filipinos but also rubbed salt in their wounds. Like Judas' kiss which signaled the impending death of Jesus, the betrayal of the senators ignited the flames of revolution. It signaled the end of the Estrada presidency.

When he realized his mistake, Judas hanged himself. The 11 senators, however, remain unrepentant. Some even tried to go to Edsa when Estrada's fate was sealed, hoping to share credit for the success of people power. The people gagged and stoned them instead.

Others, like Tatad, issued statements calling on Estrada to resign. This was a pathetic attempt to avoid the verdict of history.

Since Judas sincerely repented by killing himself, the Lord must have forgiven him. On the other hand, the senators who defected from Estrada to join the Edsa bandwagon will surely be condemned by history. As Dante wrote in "Inferno," the hottest part of hell is reserved not for the biggest sinners but for the opportunists. Those who remained loyal to their deposed benefactor, Estrada, might receive a kinder verdict from history.

Resignation can be a sincere act of atonement for a senator. There is always the possibility that they can regain the people's trust. But this option seems farthest from the minds of the 11 senators.

Edsa II empowered President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her advisers so that they in turn can empower the people and promote the national interest. However, looming large behind the new administration are the shadows of the 11 senators who will surely play Judas again should the opportunity arise.

Judas has become immortal. Although no mother or father will name a child after him, Judas' name cannot be erased from the collective memory of humanity. What the Filipino people ought to do to our modern-day Judases is give them enough rope to hang themselves.

Lazaro N. Ervite, 24, is a student of the San Agustin Seminary in Makati City.

A tale of two Edsas

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A GROUP from CNN had a very interesting question to ask: What are the similarities and differences between People Power I and People Power II?

I had been mulling the same question before, but never realized the amazing answers to it until I was forced to give them. The similarities, for one thing, are wondrously uncanny, enough to make you believe in a Divine Providence or a Divine Jester. Or make you see why Filipinos embrace their faith with a passion.

First off, both People Power I and People Power II toppled a very macho regime and a very macho president.

Ferdinand Marcos was of course the subtler macho. He was courteous to the ladies, showed impeccable manners, but wasn't beyond taking off his shirt and baring his chest when questioned about his health. I think it was Gina Lolobrigida who took that picture of him running in a beach presumably like a gazelle. He never flaunted his affairs, which were as numerous as Erap's. It was his enemies who exposed them, the most notable, or notorious, of which was his bedroom mazurka with the Hollywood starlet, Dovie Beams, which caused much furor and titillation among the public before martial law.

But these were the superficial signs. The true machismo lay in the regime itself and the political culture it spawned, a culture of violence, a culture of martial discipline, a culture of Malakas and Maganda. The last should be of interest to the women's groups—the separation of the male and female spheres into politics and art. Or into the good, the bad and the ugly, and the true, the good and the beautiful. Other than Imelda, no woman shone brightly in Marcos' martial-law sky.

Erap needs no introduction in the machismo department. Shortly before he was ousted from power, I heard Josie Lichauco say at a *parangal* for Emma Lim et al. that the women had finally gotten back at Erap. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, who is probably a lady. The depth of fury, and height of elation, were understandable. No leader in Philippine history had put down women in word and deed with such glee. To have been felled by a group of women, who dared to do what their brothers and fathers and husbands might never have done, which was stake life, limb and reputation against the most powerful man in the country—it was too rich not to chortle over.

Even more richly, both Marcos and Erap were replaced by women. I first appreciated the full irony of this when I heard Willie Nepomuceno say during Jess Abrera's book launching last year that he didn't especially relish the thought of Erap going. I didn't know that he was entirely joking. The last time something like that happened, he said, he found himself out of a job. He had mastered Marcos, he couldn't do Cory. Now, he stood to be unemployed again. He had mastered Erap, he couldn't do Gloria.

Both casualties of People Power were macho men, both beneficiaries were women. But there the parallelism ends. It is not easy to find an adjective for "women." The women's groups themselves are bound to disagree furiously on the extent to which Cory and Gloria represent the opposite of macho.

Both Marcos and Erap were the product of myth: that is the second uncanny similarity between Edsa I and II.

It's an object lesson in Philippine political culture, the power of myth. Marcos built a reputation for being larger than life on the strength of spurious war exploits. He knew that if you repeated a lie long enough, it would become true. He assiduously turned himself into the most decorated war hero this side of the Pacific, a hero deserving of the damsel who was Imelda. It was a powerful myth, which generated other myths: Marcos the ingenious (that was how he got to declare martial law), Marcos the resolute (he never wavered from his resolve but struck with certainty and precision), Marcos the invincible (there was no man alive who could outwit him). What Marcos did not know was that if you repeated a lie long enough, you yourself got to believe it. Even worse, what he did not know was that a lie was only good as long as the truth did not barge on people's minds, like the Metrocom breaking down people's doors, in the dead of night.

Erap was even more patently the product of myth. He was Asiong Salonga, the neighborhood toughie with the heart of gold. As he exploited the role in the movies, so he exploited the role in politics. He was the roguish character, teeming with the flaws of one who rose from the gutter, who would lift his countrymen up with his fists, graphically symbolized by a wrist wrapped in a black wristband. None of it was true, except the part about being a rogue. What Erap forgot, too, was that a myth was only as good as the truth did not barge on people's minds, like a knife slipped into one's ribs by a former friend, in the light of day. What irony that Asiong Salonga would be the same name that would drag Erap into ignominy, the name Chavit Singson would intone again and again like a litany as the main recipient of *jueteng* money.

Which brings us to the third similarity between Edsa I and II, which was that both Marcos and Erap were ultimately brought down by hubris. Both extremely popular, both seemingly impregnable, both caused their own downfall by sheer arrogance, a scale of abuse that had no equal in history, and a feeling that they were untouchable. Erap was the more brazen about it, openly defying public opinion by conscripting national interest to his and his cronies' interest. Lucio Tan would add ingratitude to rapacity in that respect by turning his back on his former patron after being the beneficiary of near-unbelievable largesse.

Filipinos have a nearly unbelievable capacity for tolerance. But it is not inexhaustible. There is a threshold, a limit, a point reached when the people say, "Enough is enough." Which is when the explosion comes. That is the monumental significance of the phrase, *"Tama na, Sobra na, palitan na."* It is profoundly revealing of the national character. The point was reached during Marcos' time when Ninoy Aquino was murdered on the tarmac. The point was reached during Erap's time in the impeachment trial, when public patience snapped from a series of provocations by Erap's henchmen. Ninoy Aquino's sister's dance of death was the straw that broke the camel's back. That was what drove Filipinos to restore sanity in their universe.

Lastly, both Edsas lasted exactly four days. Of such stuff is myth, legend and religion made. Can you blame Filipinos for believing in miracles?

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

(Tomorrow: the differences)

More 'aray'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

DO you have your tapes ready? For those who missed last Tuesday's column, I was talking about "bold songs" and suggested you get tapes to preview.

I hope you didn't have problems I had buying those tapes. When I first heard about the songs, I only had one title, "Arayyy," to go by and when I couldn't find the tape on the shelves, I panicked. How was I going to ask the clerk if she had "Aray?" And when I finally got to the cashier's, I had to deal, as Pinoy stores go, with something like 300 clerks taking my tapes (and examining them), writing out a receipt (and examining them), punching the cash register (and examining them) and finally wrapping the merchandise, by which time I was overwhelmed by Miriamesque paranoia, almost hearing the clerks whisper among themselves, *"Maniakis."*

That detour in the discussion was meant to highlight another class divide—one of westernized upper classes pretending to be enlightened but still looking at sex as sordid, and, out there in popular culture, a matter of fact way of looking at sex, which is allowed to permeate eating, drinking, joking, singing and just about every kind of day to day activity.

Last Tuesday I mentioned a town in Southern Tagalog where little old *lolas* goad townsfolk to exchange *loa* or religious verses turned into sexual riddles. The exchange often takes place during wedding receptions and becomes a form of sex education, not just for the newlywed but for other townsfolk, including the young. The *loa* doesn't just impart information about black cocks and the asusena flower (see Tuesday's column). The jesting also helps to lighten the tensions and shyness around discussions about sex, and about boy-girl relationships.

The current crop of bold songs can have similar functions, maybe even challenging existing norms about sexuality, gender and relationships.

Let me explain. What's striking is that although all the current bold songs are written by men, many of the latest bold songs are sung by women, and with intriguing messages. Look at this excerpt from Mystica's "Hinay-Hinay Lang":

"Walang kasing lagkit ang iyong titig/Padulas-dulas ka pa sa iyong pinahihiwatig/Cool ka lang at huwag mo namang bibiglain/Di pa sanay itong aking damdamin/At 'kala mo ako'y easing-easy lang/Madaling bumigay/Hoy! mali ka dyan."

Such songs give new meaning to the *pakipot* or coy role, as women alternate between teasing and warning. The Filipina here is seductive, with all the sexual punning and references to sticky looks, slippery manifestations (you didn't think I've given up on legalese, did you?) and abrupt thrusts. But she's also telling her boyfriend: "You're wrong if you think I'm easy, so you better go slow." The songs are saying, too, that women are aware of the risks that come with male posturing. Mystica and Mae Rivera have songs with titles like "Hudas Ka (You Judas)," "Sabi Mo sa Akin Binata Ka (You Told Me You Were a Bachelor)" and an almost contemptuous "Lalaki Ka Lang (You're Just a Male)."

I will say that many of the bold songs are forgettable with atrocious singing and even worse lyrics (there's only so much sexual punning you can do). If it weren't for the prospects of repeating the ordeal of the 300 clerks, I would have returned three of the tapes. But then I figured that even the worst of these bold songs were still better than so much of what's on the market—on one hand the Pollyanish songs that rhyme "love" with "above" and give you a toothache and on the other extreme, the songs of perpetual pining and mourning over lost, betrayed or unreciprocated love.

Many of the so-called bold songs, let me emphasize again, are not really bold. They mock the old school of love songs, as well as many other traditional notions of love, courtship and sex. Andrew E. is well known for such bawdy satire and I'm glad there's a whole album of his songs, "Mag Batee na Tayo," done by Marissa Sanchez. The songs mercilessly poke fun at a range of characters we will find all too familiar. "X-men" is a girl's lament about falling for macho gay guys while "Dakota Nota" (gay slang for hefty male endowments) parodies musical themes from Mexican telenovelas to pick on social climbers and size fetishists.

I mentioned all these bold songs are written by men, which is another reason why the lyrics should be dissected. For example, in "Hudas Ka" the woman lashes out at her feckless lover, *"Anak ka ng ina mo talaga,"* sort of saying you are an s.o.b. I plan to play that tape to a group of young people and ask them what they think of that line. I suspect they'll suggest we change that to *"Anak ka ng tatay mo"*—you are your father's son.

It's not just the current bold songs that can be used. It's time we rediscover the playful candor that Filipinos have in relation to sex. Look, for example, at how "Aray" is used in this old *loa*:

Aray ko, Diyos Ko! Ako'y nasusedi—/Ang aking bibingka'y ninakaw kagabi,/Nakuha ang gitna, natira ang tabi. (Even my Tagalog friends couldn't tell me what *"nasusedi"* means, which suggests how very old the verse is. Anyway, here's the rest of the translation: Someone stole my *bibingka* last night, taking the middle, leaving the sides.)

Such verses, like the current bawdy songs, aren't going to corrupt our morals or send people into lustful rampages. In fact, I think that we Filipinos spend so much time singing, joking, laughing, talking and, sigh, writing about sex that we don't get to do "it" as much. Which is a real shame because we probably end up missing out on some of the best of *luto ng Diyos*, God's cooking. For those who are not familiar with that term, that's a common street metaphor for sex, so sublime it has to be divine.

* * *

Comments to aray@pinoykasi.org

LETTERS

Failure of party-list election

WE read with interest in the INQUIRER's Feb. 17 issue, "The party-list system in review," written by Jerry F. Adevoso. We can't help but agree.

Let us share our experience during the 1998 election. We belong to the Maritime Party, a group organized by mostly mariners to be the voice of the seafarers in Congress. We participated in the election without any funds.

The people didn't know what the party-list system was all about. The election canvassers didn't understand what the party-list system was, either.

What the canvassers knew was it would need tremendous work to count the party-list votes. Some 125 parties participated and just to look at the long list was really tiring. We wonder how the nine party-list groups won.

It was only after the canvassing of the votes cast for national and local candidates that the party-list votes were tallied. It was already 12 midnight when they started counting the party-list votes. That is why, we said there was a midnight canvassing of the party-list votes. The rest was history.

When the dust settled, only nine groups obtained the required 2 percent of the total votes cast to win. These nine groups gained a congressional seat by posting 250,000 votes each. And because the Apec got more than that number, it was given two seats.

As for us, we've got very few votes. Why? We really don't know, but we think we now have the answer. The party-list election in 1998 was a failure. Voters didn't know what to do. In fact, the bulk of the voters did not bother to vote for party-list candidates at all, leaving the party-list slots empty.

These are lessons we have now. Let us ensure that our votes are counted this time.

We call on the Commission on Elections to do everything that can be done to ensure credible, orderly and clean elections this coming May. If this is done, we can have a truly party-list system in government.—**LEO J. SANTIAGO, national chair, Maritime Party, Rm. 303, YIC Bldg. corner UN Avenue and San Marcelino Street, Ermita, Manila**

Clear case of environmental opportunism

WE would like to raise serious concerns about the proposed Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium (SBME), a captive display facility for marine mammals to be established at the Camayan Wharf in the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. The project is being proposed by Active Environments, a US-based company, headed by Timothy Desmond, and supported by SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo.

While proponents of the project insist that public display of marine mammals such as dolphins and false killer whales promote conservation and education, the project is clearly a commercial undertaking. Active Environments, SBMA and surprisingly, the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas (Nipa), as proponents and investors in the project are estimated to make between $4.42 million and $7.29 million within a period of five years for a return on investment (ROI) ranging from 22 to 52 percent.

The project clearly distorts the essence of community-based approach in resource management. The SBMA's claim of community involvement only goes as far as the transfer of knowledge on advanced first aid, language instruction and water skills training, among others. They intend to involve local fishermen in supplying the fish for food of the captive mammals, but in truth, the fish is now entirely imported. Their claim to make Aetas their business partners only leaves one wondering as to the terms and conditions of such partnership. In all of these, the role of the local community and the benefits to be derived are marginal. In addition, one needs at least P2,000 or 30 percent of the minimum wage in Zambales to enable only one family member to see these captive marine mammals.

Captive breeding is inconsistent with protected area management, which is the strategy being adopted by the Global Environment Fund (GEF)-funded Conservation for Priority Protected Areas Program (CPPAP) from which the Nipa draws its funds. As a rule, the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), which is the Philippine strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, recommends the use of *ex-situ* (out of site) strategy for conservation only as a last resort.

We lament the involvement of the Nipa in this undertaking. As "steward of the GEF representing the Philippine sector," the Nipa's involvement as an investor in this project does not fall within its mandate.

The Haribon Foundation has already expressed this observation early on and we reiterate our opposition. Should the project fail, we expect the Nipa to explain its participation in this undertaking to all community beneficiaries for whom funding for livelihood projects had been originally allocated.

We are extremely concerned because as of this writing, construction of the facilities at the SBMA is ongoing in spite of the clamor to scrap the project altogether. Thus, we urgently call on acting Environment Secretary Jomari D. Gerochi, SBMA Chair Payumo and Nipa president Egon Cayosa to reconsider this clear case of environmental opportunism disguised as a medium for conservation, livelihood and education. We ask that genuine conservation programs dedicated to protected area management and biodiversity conservation should instead be pursued, if indeed that is the primary concern.—**HECTOR D. SOLIMAN, president, Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources, 9 Malingap corner Malumanay Streets, Teacher's Village, Diliman, Quezon City**

No basis for follow-up story

THIS is in reaction to your story, "Priest questions Noli's 'pro-people' stance." (PDI, 2/14/01) Among other things, Fr. Raul Enriquez alleged that Noli de Castro was probably "ordered" by a "principal" and that is why a story on a *shabu* bust operation in Barangay Bignay II, Sariaya, Quezon, was not aired on the TV program, "Magandang Gabi... Bayan."

The story of the heroism of some residents of Bignay II was initially aired over "TV Patrol" in September 2000. After several days, the crew of "Magandang Gabi... Bayan" went to Sariaya to make a follow-up story not so much on that particular incident but more on reports that Sariaya Bay was becoming a haven of smuggling. Our crew stayed in Sariaya for three days and went as far as Pagbilao, Quezon. It was unfortunate that we did not find residents who were credible and brave enough to give us factual and detailed accounts of past smuggling activities in the area. The stories they told were either "hearsay" or "third account" information. Father Enriquez was one of those interviewed.

"Magandang Gabi...Bayan" has a track record of 12 years of truthful and responsible journalism. We do not air stories that are "half-baked," and so the editorial judgment was made not to air the story until we could substantiate the reports with solid or hard facts and witnesses.

It is unfortunate that incidents such as this are being used to tarnish the reputation of our former anchor and are coming out just as the campaign season is heating up.—**DEWIE CHANG, segment producer, "Magandang Gabi... Bayan," ABS-CBN Broadcast Center, Scout E.A. Esguerra Avenue corner Mother Ignacia Street, Quezon City**

Summer classes in Harvard, Oxford, etc.

AGAIN, I envy all of you because it sounds so exciting there in Manila. Motormouth Miriam has just called the throngs of people who went to Edsa II "insects" and "lower life forms." She also said a mouthful about her university affiliations.

But pray tell, if memory serves, she went to Harvard, Oxford and Cambridge on the summer classes that these universities offer. She did not go to any of these universities on their two-term, regular school years. And she conveniently forgot to mention that she got her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, since to her mind, it does not seem to have the same ring as Oxford and Harvard.

Well, even Richard Gomez, her fellow Erap lover, went to the Film School of New York University. The summer class, that is.—**DANTON REMOTO, Department of English, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA**

Selective prosecution in new administration

ON JAN. 2, 2001, the Public Interest Center Inc., filed with the Office of the Ombudsman a case for plunder (malversation) against former Speaker Manuel Villar. To this date, no action has been taken on the case.

On the other hand, the Ombudsman has been investigating with alacrity a similar case of "plunder" filed much later against former President Joseph "Erap" Ejercito Estrada.

That the charge against former Speaker Villar is not baseless is manifest in the narration of facts/supported by documents in the affidavit-complaint. Please help us demand that the case be investigated as speedily as any of the cases against former President Erap, which are being rushed to assure the public that there is no "selective prosecution" or selective justice in the Office of the Ombudsman or under the new dispensation.—**LAUREANO T. ANGELES, president, Public Interest Center Inc., Suite 206, QC Manor Hotel, Kamias Road, Quezon City**

Those darned 'wang-wangs'

AS a last recourse, I've decided to write your paper.

Every day at six in the morning, I drive from Valle Verde 2 to bring my son to class at the Ateneo. Every day I am surrounded by moronic drivers. Generally, I have the patience to put up with them, but today was the last straw.

About a month ago, at the intersections of Libis and Julia Vargas, and at Libis and Ortigas, coming from Quezon City, "No Right on Red" signs were put up. Being a stickler for following traffic rules and regulations, I conscientiously obey these signs, though it may mean an extra five-minute wait in an otherwise empty street. (Yes, I am one of those people who stop at red lights at two in the morning.)

Last week, when I did the same thing, a jeepney driver shouted at me, *"Maaga pa naman eh!"*

Goodness! I did not realize that following traffic laws depended on the hour of day. But then again, what can you expect? He wanted to make more trips to earn his daily bread. Forgiven.

More recently, however, as I slowly rolled toward the intersection, I noticed everyone ahead of me blithely turning right, ignoring the huge sign. When I stopped at the corner, I heard honks and beeps of all kinds. Keep calm, I told myself.

Then the driver of this Fiera-type vehicle behind me, with dark tint all over, including the windshield, started his *wang-wang* (siren). I thought that those darn things had been outlawed! Who the hell was this person, anyway? I ignored him.

When the light finally turned green, and I made a right turn, the Fiera moved to my side and stayed there for a good five to seven seconds. *Nanakot siguro.*

Aren't there only a very few persons authorized to have a *wang-wang* in this whole country: the president, the vice president, the Senate president, the speaker and the chief justice? I don't think any of them were in that Fiera at six o'clock that morning. The nerve!

With the new administration in place, perhaps something can finally be done about those *wang-wangs* and the idiots who use them illegally. Why don't the authorities go after the shops that sell them? It speaks ill of a government when citizens do not feel safe driving around in their own city.—**LIZ FRANCO, Pasig City**

Need a job? Don't go to Mike

By Armand N. Nocum

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday told those looking for jobs in her administration to stop handing their resumés to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

At two official functions, Ms Macapagal said the resumés had only one place to go—the garbage can.

"Stop giving him your curriculum vitaé because they go straight to the waste basket," the President said at a press briefing at the La Dolce Fontana in Greenhills, San Juan.

Earlier, Mr. Arroyo was linked to intense lobbying efforts to put Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa in the Armed Forces of the Philippines' top post as chief of staff.

In her speech at the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the President also told people not to entertain any illusions that they would get posts or deals at the Palace by lobbying her or her relatives.

She said she was sticking to her Administrative Order No. 1, which prohibits her immediate relatives from entering into deals with government or facilitating appointments to government posts.

RP-Taiwan labor pact approves direct hiring

TAIPEI—Taiwan and the Philippines have inked a new labor agreement that should reduce the financial burden for Filipino workers applying to work on the island, the Philippines' chief representative in Taiwan said yesterday.

The agreement eliminates the need for workers to go through recruitment agencies in the Philippines and brokers in Taiwan, said Rodolfo Reyes, managing director of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office.

"The direct hiring scheme allows companies to hire without passing through middlemen who often charge exorbitant fees," said Reyes, Manila's de facto ambassador in Taiwan. Like most nations, the Philippines does not have formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

The Philippine and Taiwanese governments have no control over the fees charged by the brokers and recruiters, and Taiwanese brokers were known to charge workers as much as $4,620 for a job, Reyes said.

"That fee is exorbitant considering minimum (monthly) wage for factory workers is about $492," Reyes said.

Under the agreement, Taiwanese factories hiring Filipino workers will have to deal with the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency, the official agency in Manila in charge of sourcing out jobs for Filipino workers abroad, Reyes said.

The agreement, however, covers only factory workers and not maids. Individual Taiwanese employers seeking domestic helpers, such as caretakers for the elderly, will still have to go through middlemen in Taiwan or the Philippines, Reyes said.

Previously, both employers and workers were at the mercy of recruiters and brokers. The new agreement protects the welfare of the workers and at the same time ensures the Taiwanese employers get their fare share, Reyes said.

Reyes said that "the exorbitant fees" charged by middlemen were a "great concern" for both Taiwan and the Philippines, and the new two-year agreement "was a tribute to Taiwan's Council of Labor Affairs."

The new agreement comes amid improving relations between the two neighbors, who last year ended a bitter aviation dispute and a ban on Filipino workers in Taiwan. The ban had cost Manila as much as $20 million in foregone wages. *AP*

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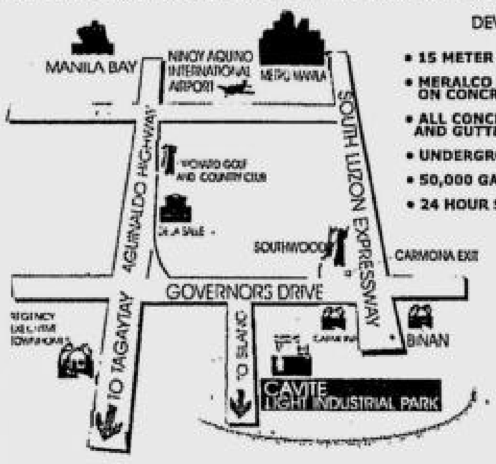

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Gordon says 4 new cases meant to block his nomination

THE FILING of four new graft cases against Tourism Secretary Richard J. Gordon before the Ombudsman on the same day his appointment was announced revealed an intent to block his confirmation.

This was the contention of Manuel Quijano, former head of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority legal department, who noted that there were no cases pending against Gordon at the time President Macapagal-Arroyo named him to the tourism post.

On the day the media carried news of Gordon's appointment, however, the four cases were filed against him at the Office of the Ombudsman, according to Quijano.

Quijano said the cases were filed by Gualberto de la Llana, who had earlier filed eight cases against Gordon and his family with the Ombudsman, all of which were dismissed.

Quijano said De la Llana lost to Mayor Kate Gordon in the congressional race in 1987, while his wife lost to James L. Gordon Jr. when she ran for Congress in 1995.

Quijano said two other cases were also filed against Gordon by the head of the SBMA department of lands and assets with the Deputy Ombudsman the day after Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said he would block the confirmation of Cabinet appointees with cases pending before the Ombudsman.

The cover letter, which was signed by Juan T. Montelibano, the department head, to Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, however, was dated Dec. 28, 2000, way before even the assumption to the presidency of Ms Macapagal.

One of cases filed by De la Llana alleged that in 1994, when Gordon was still its chair, the SBMA purchased 20 pickup trucks through Coastal Petroleum and part of the payment for the trucks was charged against Coastal's rent.

Quijano, who was one of the respondents in the case, said, "The SBMA purchased the trucks through Coastal with prior approval from the Office of the President. Coastal advanced the money for the trucks and the SBMA agreed to amortize the amount from Coastal's future rental payments. In effect, Coastal financed the purchase of the trucks at no interest."

Another case filed by De la Llana involved the purchase of grass-cutting equipment through a public bidding, while a third case involved the purchase of laminated sacks through local canvass.

Quijano said Gordon was involved in the process only as a final approving officer but had no direct participation in the bidding.

The charges filed by Montelibano questioned the legality of the agreements entered into by Gordon for the houses he was leasing at Subic.

Quijano, however, explained that "when Secretary Gordon was chair of SBMA, he opted to pay for his use of the houses by entering into lease agreements."

Expert urges law to combat money-laundering

THE COUNTRY'S banking system runs the risk of attracting criminally acquired money, unless Congress passes strict laws against money laundering, a leading anti-money-laundering expert warned recently.

Rowan Bosworth-Davies, a principal consultant with the Unisys Strategic Global Business Development Program, said that proceeds from criminal activities hidden in local banks would initially encourage cash in-flows.

"But this would mean undermining the reputation of the country's bank sector, thus rendering that country less attractive to other countries for banking purposes," he warned.

The Philippines was among the countries blacklisted for refusing to cooperate in the international efforts against money laundering.

Money laundering is described as the process where money from criminal activities are disguised and given a new origin to hide its nature or source from the attention of the law. It has become an international phenomenon that crosses borders through institutional systems for global payments.

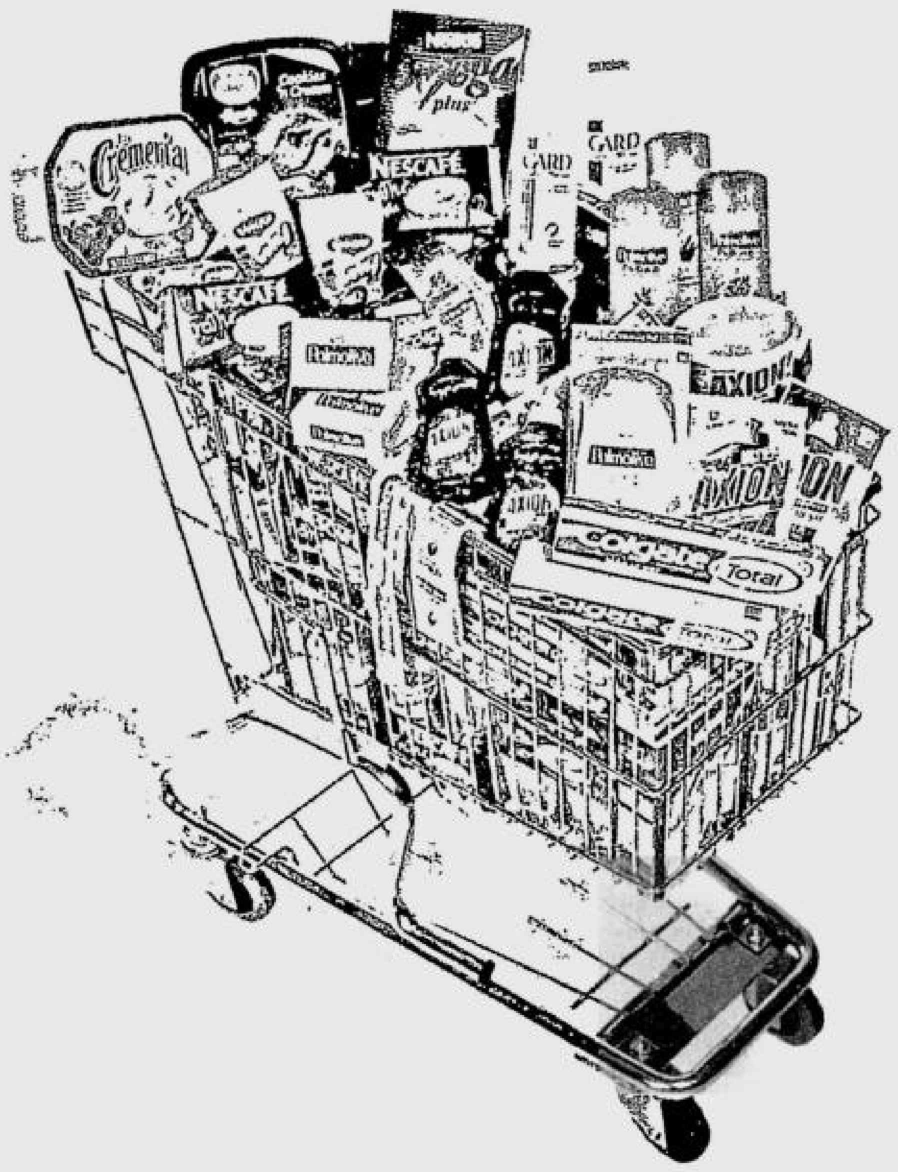
Illicit money laundered can come from organized crimes like drug trafficking, terrorism, theft, extortion, as well as tax evasion.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the Paris-based intercountry policy-making body combating money laundering, has already identified the Philippines as one of the 15 jurisdictions that is "non-cooperative in the fight against money laundering." This non-compliance has posed serious repercussions on the local banking industry.

Bosworth-Davies recommended that Congress urgently enact an anti-money laundering bill that would "criminalize" money laundering.

He urged financial institutions to be prudent in checking, identifying and recognizing possible money laundering transactions. Although there is no definite way to distinguish these illegal transactions, financial practitioners, he said, must truly know their client to recognize client behavior and transaction patterns.

Bosworth-Davies was here recently for a series of talks on money laundering organized by the Bankers Association of the Philippines and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.



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3. Enter the number of the Globe Handyphone (0917+cellphone number) you are sending the message to.
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    - * To compose own message, press 2.
    - * For HELP, press #

To send a pre-composed message:

Pre-composed messages are commonly used text messages that are pre-programmed so that you no longer need to key in your message. To send a pre-composed message, simply key in the number of the message you wish to send.

01 – Where are you?
02 – Please call me now.
03 – I'm home already.
04 – I'm at the office now.
05 – I'm on my way there.
06 – Okay!
07 – How are you?
08 – Have a nice day!
09 – Thank you!
10 – I love you.
11 – Happy Birthday!
12 – I will be late.
13 – I will call you later.
14 – I'm sorry.
15 – What time are you coming home?

To send your self-composed message:

As with cellphone texting, just press the number key once, twice, thrice or four times for the letter you wish to use.

- * For space, press zero (0).
- * For backspace, press star key once (*); To erase whole word, press star key twice (**).
- * For punctuation marks, press
    - 1 – period (.)
    - 11- comma (,)
    - 111 - question mark (?)
    - 1111 – exclamation point (!)
    - 11111 – dash (-)
- * Press pound key twice (##) to end your message.

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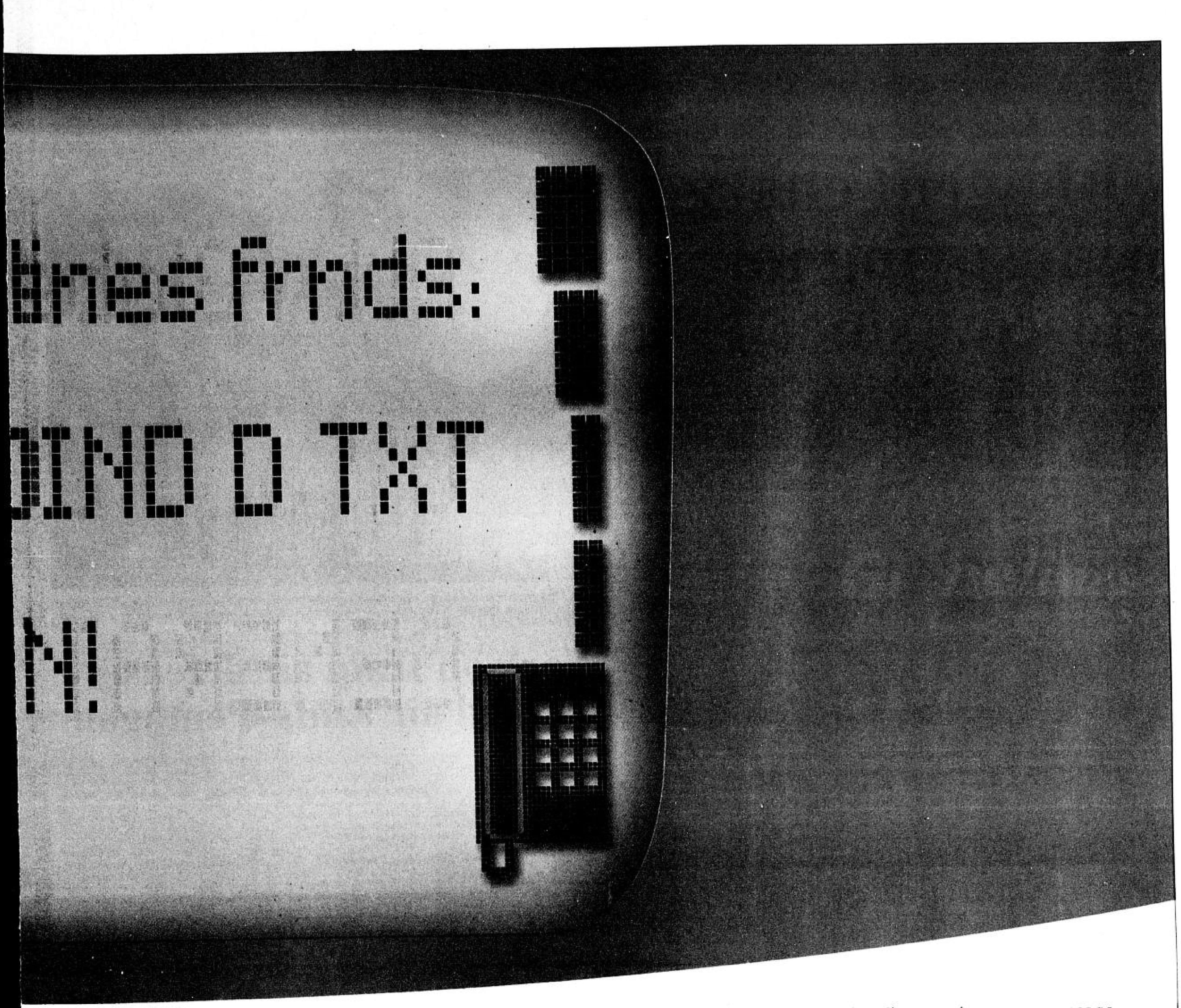

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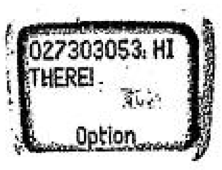

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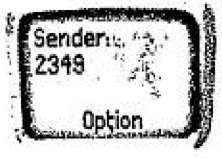

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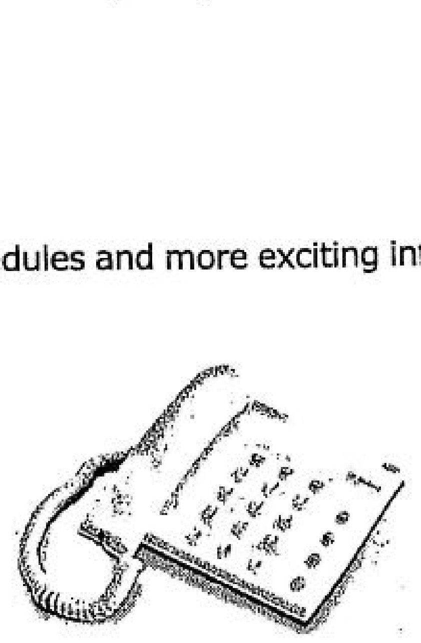

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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

FBI agent charged with spying for Moscow since 1985

WASHINGTON—Long-time FBI agent Robert Philip Hanssen on Tuesday was formally charged with spying for Moscow since 1985, selling information that damaged US security and compromised three Russian double agents working for the United States.

President George W. Bush described the case as an "extremely serious" betrayal of US security.

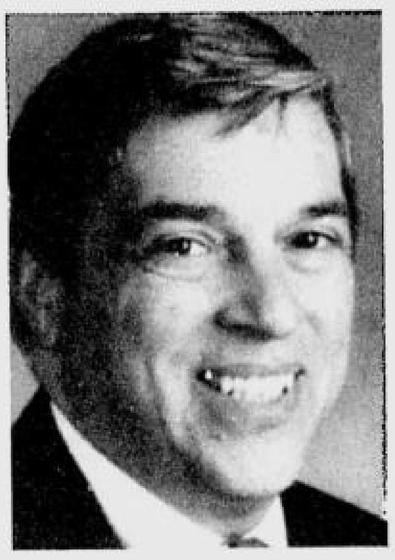
"Allegations of espionage of an FBI counterintelligence agent are extremely serious and deeply disturbing," Bush told journalists while on a visit to the mid-western state of Missouri.

Counter-intelligence agent Hanssen, 56, was charged earlier Tuesday with spying for Moscow for the past 16 years, handing over "substantial volumes of classified information" in return for cash and diamonds, according to FBI director Louis Freeh.

"Hanssen was paid over $600,000 in cash and diamonds" for his services, according to the affidavit. The Russians also "placed funds in escrow in a Moscow bank on Hanssen's behalf" that was recently worth some $800,000.

The affidavit said that Hanssen "compromised numerous sources of the United States Intelligence community . . . resulting in their arrest, imprisonment and, as to two individuals, execution."

Hanssen gave the KGB information on three Russian double agents who had been trained by the FBI and were working at their Washington Embassy.



FBI file photo of Hanssen.

Two of them—Valeriy Martynov and Sergey Motorin—were convicted of espionage and executed when they returned to Russia. The third, Boris Yuzhin, was sentenced to life in prison, and was released under a general amnesty to political prisoners in 1992, according to the affidavit.

As an FBI special agent with secret clearance, Hanssen also had access to "documents of exceptional sensitivity" that he handed over to Russian intelligence, the court papers said.

Russia's foreign intelligence service refused to comment Tuesday.

"We do not comment on such reports," Foreign Intelligence Service spokesperson Boris Labusov told Itar-Tass in Moscow.

A combined FBI, CIA and US Justice Department sting operation led to Hanssen's arrest on Sunday, in the biggest spy scandal to hit the United States in the past four years.

US Attorney General John Ashcroft, speaking at the same press conference as Freeh, said that Hanssen's actions were "a very serious breach against the security of the United States."

"Individuals who commit treasonable acts against the United States will be held accountable," Ashcroft warned.

If convicted, Hanssen would become only the third FBI agent ever to be convicted of spying.

"This case is a grave and tragic moment for us," Freeh told reporters. Hanssen, he said, was "the trusted insider (who) betrayed this trust without detection."

Freeh pointed to number of big color photographs to describe the "dead-drop" sites in suburban Virginia where Hanssen had left documents and where money had been dropped for him.

As a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent, Freeh said, Hanssen had access to some of "the most sensitive and classified information in the US government."

Using various code-names, such as "Ramon" and "B," Hanssen then used encrypted communication and other clandestine techniques he learned at the FBI to pass this information on to first Soviet Union, then Russian, intelligence agents.

"Hanssen used his training and experience . . . (he) never revealed to them his true identity or even where he worked," Freeh said.

"There must be more we can do at the FBI to protect ourselves from such an occurrence," he added, announcing that former FBI chief Judge William Webster would be conducting an independent detailed review into the FBI's internal security procedures. *AFP*

INVASION
2nd August, 1990

A KUWAITI woman holds a poster marking the anniversary of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq during a solidarity rally with Kuwaiti POWs in Amman Feb. 20. Officials say the fate of some 600 missing people, 90 percent of them Kuwaitis, is one of the most emotive legacies of Iraq's occupation. REUTERS

Work on Iraqi air defenses spurred air raids–Pentagon

WASHINGTON—The US air strike against Iraqi radar and command facilities near Baghdad last week was precipitated in part by Chinese construction of an underground fiber optic network that would have significantly strengthened Iraq's ability to target US aircraft, a Pentagon official said Tuesday.

Among the targets struck in Friday's raid—the biggest in two years—were command and control nodes that used fiber optic cables installed by Chinese personnel, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"I doesn't matter who would have been installing it," the official said. "It matters that it would have significantly enhanced their command and control ability to move surveillance data into fire control locations. It's certainly one of the reasons we struck the facilities we did."

Despite the strike, US aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone over southern Iraq came under renewed surface-to-air missile and anti-aircraft artillery fire over the weekend, Pentagon spokespersons said.

"We didn't expect the effect of Friday's strikes to be to go to zero, the Iraqi air defense system capability," said Rear Admiral Craig Quigley. "And, indeed, they did fire both AAA and surface-to-air missiles at coalition aircraft over the weekend."

The Chinese connection was first disclosed Monday by Pentagon officials, who said the desire to avoid casualties among Chinese workers laying the fiber optic cables was a factor in staging the raids on the Moslem sabbath when few people work.

In Beijing, the Chinese foreign ministry rejected the claim that Chinese workers assisted in the fiber optic work. "I have never heard information like this," foreign ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao said at the ministry's regular briefing.

"We know that Chinese personnel were installing this," said the Pentagon official who spoke anonymously.

Quigley, a senior Pentagon spokesperson, declined to comment on the fiber optic network or foreign participation in installing it.

He said the State Department would be discussing the reports with the Chinese.

UN sanctions in place since the end of the Gulf War bar exports to Iraq that would allow Baghdad to rebuild its military capabilities. *AFP*

Asians in Australia fear rise of racism

SYDNEY—Evylin Lee sorted bright red chilies in a grocer's shop in Chinatown while wondering if she and millions of other Asian migrants who have worked hard to build lives in Australia could one day be forced to flee their new home.

Lee, a friendly, confident woman who emigrated 25 years ago from Hong Kong, is worried about the policies of Pauline Hanson and her right-wing party One Nation, which espouses an antiestablishment platform opposing Asian immigration, globalization and welfare for Aborigines.

"If she got more power, I think there would be trouble," Lee said. "All the Asian people and others (migrants) would try to escape or run away from Australia. They'd think they couldn't live here and they'd rather look for somewhere peaceful."

Australia has been a magnet in recent years for Asian and Middle Eastern migrants, many of whom came to escape war and persecution. Now they worry about facing a backlash from right-wing groups which want to keep the country as a European society based on its British traditions.

While their parents worry about the potential threat, some younger Asian-Australians believe One Nation will never be more than a noisy minority, although they don't dismiss it.

Susan Lee, who sells fluffy koala bear toys and other quintessential Australian souvenirs, says most Australians are tolerant of the melting pot of cultures that makes up the population of 19 million people. But she says Hanson is a racist who could damage the nation's tourism and trade industries.

"According to her (Hanson's) policies all people who are not white should be wiped out of Australia, which is totally unfair," said Lee, a 17-year-old Taiwanese-Australian.

"Australia is a multicultural country . . . and we've been doing just fine living with Australians. She (Hanson) would ruin Australia's reputation."

Hanson, a former fish and chip shop owner, stormed into national politics in 1998 when her One Nation party captured 11 seats in Queensland state elections. The party again caused alarm bells when it did well this month in two state elections, winning about 10 percent of the vote.

Australia kept Asia at a distance for decades and had a "White Australia Policy" which resisted non-European immigration for nearly 20 years after World War II. Asian immigrants have flowed in to the country in recent years, giving cities such as Sydney a strong Asian aspect.

Some Asians have united to resist Hanson, including the handful who sit in the federal and state legislatures. However, many Asian-Australians wait silently, hoping that the major parties will stamp out One Nation.

"The ethnic communities, and in particular the Asian community, has a concern that if Pauline Hanson is elected again then she will revert to her old ways of attacking migrants, Aboriginal people (and) single mothers," said New South Wales state politician Peter Wong. "It will not give Australia a good profile . . . overseas."

Wong, a member of the Unity Party, which promotes the solidarity of all cultures, said Hanson must make contentious statements about race because she has little to offer on other issues.

"She seems to know nothing about the economy, social welfare, defense or health," he said. "Therefore, she'll go back to the issues that are headline grabbing (such as) migrants, Asians and refugees that are spreading disease in this country—all extremist views." *AP*

More jail riots to come, Brazil guards predict

SAO PAULO, Brazil—The biggest prison uprising in Brazil's history was just a trial balloon for a massive rebellion against a penal system plagued by overcrowding and corruption, the head of a prison guards' union warns.

"The uprising was a way of testing the government and its capacity to react," Nilson de Oliveira, president of the Sao Paulo State Correction Workers Union, said Tuesday. "It was nothing more than a dress rehearsal for a mega-rebellion that can explode any time."

Just one day after the end of wild rebellions that swept through 29 prisons, some 800 inmates at another jail took nine guards hostage Tuesday, Brazil's O Globo news agency reported.

Police surrounded the latest restive jail—Pirajui Penitentiary, 320 km northwest of Sao Paulo—and were negotiating with the prisoners late Tuesday.

The riot came less than 24 hours after authorities regained control of 29 facilities in Sao Paulo state following a daylong uprising that left 16 inmates dead, and a nation asking just who is in charge behind its bars: the government or organized crime?

Officials said the uprising was orchestrated by the First Capital Command gang, known by its Portuguese-language initials as PCC.

Officials "underestimated" the strength of the PCC, said Marco Vinicio Petreluzzi, Sao Paulo's public security secretary.

Tuesday's uprising at Parajui was also organized by First Capital Command, O Globo reported.

Brazilian authorities acknowledge that neglect, corruption and overcrowding have pushed the nation's prisons to the verge of explosion. Rebellions among the 94,000 inmates in Sao Paulo state are almost a daily occurrence.

Across Sao Paulo state, an estimated 800 new inmates get dumped into prisons each month, and overcrowding is chronic. In many prisons, inmates sleep in shifts or standing up, tied to the wall with sheets because there's no room to lie down. *AP*

MORI

Mori gains respite as Diet defeats move to oust ruling party official

TOKYO—Parliament rejected an opposition proposal Wednesday to oust a committee chair who credited Japan's wartime aggression with freeing Asian nations from colonialism.

The 275-184 vote in the lower house downed the motion to depose ruling party lawmaker and former defense chief Hosei Norota as the chair of the pivotal budget committee.

The proposal was part of the opposition's campaign to stall government proceedings on the 2001 budget and put more pressure on Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori to resign.

The opposition boycotted the budget committee's session on Tuesday to protest Norota, whom they also accused of scheduling committee hearings without consulting with them.

The defeat of the motion had been expected, since the three-party ruling coalition led by Mori's Liberal Democrats holds a majority of seats in the powerful chamber.

In a speech to LDP supporters on Sunday, Norota reportedly said that Southeast Asia was liberated from European colonialism by Japanese militarism in the 1930s and 40s.

The comments angered Japan's Asian neighbors, and added to Mori's troubles. Foreign Minister Yohei Kono on Tuesday said that Norota was not speaking for the government.

The flap over Norota's comments came as support ratings for Mori's hobbled government have dropped to the single digits, and speculation was building that he would step down.

Mori has also faced rising criticism over his handling of the Feb. 9 collision between a US Navy submarine and a Japanese fishing vessel. Nine Japanese—including four students—were missing and presumed dead.

Mori was told of the accident while he was playing golf, and critics have attacked him for continuing to play instead of immediately taking charge of Japan's response. *AP*

New cardinals reflect changing face of Catholic Church

BY FRANCES D'EMILIO

VATICAN CITY—The last scarlet stitches have been threaded through 44 identical robes for the newest princes of the Roman Catholic Church. The oath in Latin of loyalty recited on their big day has been repeated over and over.

Even Pope John Paul II's challenge when he bestows the three-cornered hat on his chosen churchmen is fixed: "Be ready to spill blood if need be to spread the faith."

But behind the unchanging ritual of Wednesday's consistory ceremony in St. Peter's Square is the changing face of the Catholic Church as the start of its third millennium—less European, and more Developing World, the place where the faith is expanding.

John Paul, now in the 23rd year of his papacy, has worked to boost the ranks of the cardinals and their geographical diversity.

In naming a record number of cardinals this time around, he ignored the limits set by predecessor Paul VI on the number of cardinals younger than 80 and therefore eligible to vote for the next pontiff.

"He probably was trying to satisfy the needs of a rapidly expanding church around the world," said one of the new cardinals, the US theologian Avery Dulles.

With Wednesday's ceremony, the number of voting-age cardinals jumps from 120 to 135.

All but 10 were appointed by this Pope; most share his conservative views on sexual and other morality matters and liberal ideas on social justice issues such as workers' rights.

For centuries, Italians were virtually synonymous with the Vatican and the Krakow bishop's election in 1978 as the first non-Italian pontiff in 455 years shocked many. The Polish pope has continued to "internationalize" the church hierarchy.

Out of 184 cardinals, as of Wednesday, 51 are from the Americas. Europe has 96, but many are aging and not eligible to vote in the conclave. The number of voting-age Europeans is 65 versus 40 from the Americas.

The Italians, a large but often divided lobby, are 40-strong, by far the largest national group, but only 24 are electors. The largest grouping after Europeans are Latin Americans, 33, with 27 of voting age. Latin America has about 40 percent of the world's 1 billion Catholics.

Among the new Latin American cardinals is one of the youngest and one some observers say has a shot at being the next pontiff: Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga, 58, the first cardinal from Honduras.

Like so many in the College of Cardinals, he skirted questions about the next conclave.

"Only the Holy Spirit knows," he said in an interview, relying on the familiar formula response to conclave questions.

"I'm not considered 'papabile' (a papal contender)," he hastened to add. "Those were the words of some friends."

A few days earlier, another new Latin American cardinal, perhaps not yet versed in the unspoken edict against talking about conclave politics, was unusually frank.

Caracas Archbishop Ignacio Antonio Velasco Garcia said the next pope would likely be from Latin America. Then he even raised his hand to show how he'd vote.

Much will depend on when the next conclave is held. John Paul has named 201 cardinals during his papacy. Forty-one never lived to see a conclave. *AP*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Thursday, February 22, 2001

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

ROUNDUP

Woman charges son with murder

STA. MARIA, Bulacan—A woman filed murder charges against her 19-year-old son for killing Friday his stepbrother in Barangay Pulong Buhangin here. The suspect, now detained at the municipal jail, was accused of killing Jericho John Granil, 3. Police said the suspect admitted that he banged Granil's head on a concrete wall and bit it after he mistook him for a "demon." *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

2 teenagers' bodies found

ANGAT, Bulacan—Police here Sunday recovered the bodies of two teenagers from the Angat River. The victims were identified as Ryan Leonardo and Aldrin de Leon, both 15. They were reported missing on Feb. 16 after they went swimming in the river in Sitio Liag in Barangay Banaban here. Police said the boys could have drowned while crossing a deep portion of the river. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

P2.5-M bid for cityhood

CAUAYAN, Isabela—The municipal council approved the allotment of P2.5 million as campaign fund for the town's cityhood bid. This town aims to be the province's second city after Santiago City Mayor Faustino Dy III said the cityhood bill was passed by the bicameral conference committee and was awaiting President Macapagal's signature. Municipal treasurer Francisco Dalere said the P2.5 million would be taken from the town's capital outlay for heavy equipment. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Quake jolts Samar, Leyte

TACLOBAN CITY—A strong earthquake jolted Samar and Leyte early yesterday. No one was reported hurt. Bobby Cañete, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) officer-in-charge based in Palo, Leyte, said the tremor registered at Intensity 5 in Catbalogan, Villareal, Pinabacdao and nearby towns in Samar, Intensity 4 in Talalora, Pinabacdao and nearby places in Samar, and Intensity 3 in Calbayog City, Tacloban City and Basey, Samar. Its epicenter was 19 km southeast of Catbalogan. It was tectonic in origin and its source was the Philippine Fault Line. *Vicente S. Labro, PDI Visayas Bureau*

NBI mansion probers barred

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Louzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Aides of businessman Manuel Zamora, as well as officials of Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco), barred the National Bureau of Investigation from their properties here on Tuesday.

The bureau launched its probe of Baguio real estate believed to be part of ousted President Joseph Estrada's alleged illegal wealth.

Zamora, Estrada's closest adviser, owns a compound on Paterno Street, along the city's so-called Millionaires' Row, which was widely rumored here as the fallen president's property in 1999.

Estrada was also rumored to be the beneficiary of a P45-million log cabin, the first of 25 vacation houses being leased out by CJHDevco inside a 31-hectare forested area once owned by the Voice of America.

Primitivo Najera, deputy director of the NBI organized crime division, said the property managers at John Hay wanted him to produce a court order first before he would be allowed to see the controversial log house.

He said it had been harder to get into the Zamora compound, whose architectural design matched the John Hay cabins because of their use of treated cedar logs imported from Canada.

Najera said he received a directive to investigate the Baguio mansions only last weekend.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco told the INQUIRER on Friday that the Zamora property was not included in the list of properties linked to Mr. Estrada.

Wycoco, who attended the Philippine Military Academy alumni homecoming here, said the NBI was on the final stage of its investigation of five alleged "Erap mansions" in the Wack Wack subdivision in Mandaluyong City and a "Boracay mansion" in New Manila.

"But we are about to probe that (Zamora compound). We are only wrapping up the investigation of five properties in Metro Manila and that of 'Boracay' (which were all described by media reports as Mr. Estrada's lavish gifts to his mistresses). We have been able to trace the paper trail, but we just need to put them together first. That investigation, contrary to a report from (former Interior Secretary Alfredo) Lim, is still ongoing," Wycoco said.

Rumors of the Zamora property's connections to Estrada were disclosed by the INQUIRER in 1999, but their trail of documents detailing the sales transaction of this high-valued real estate ended only with a final deed of sale to Zamora, brother of former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora.

An insider, however, supplied the INQUIRER with a photograph of a presidential seal atop the Zamora mansion's fireplace.

The seal was removed following the INQUIRER exposé, the insider said.

Lawyer Pablito Sanidad, former chair of the Free Legal Assistance Group (Flag), said it was this photograph, published by the INQUIRER "which convinced authorities that Mr. Estrada had more right to the Paterno Street compound than Zamora."

Sanidad was approached by the NBI this week to shed light on documents that suggest that Estrada's alleged cronies and business allies were forced to shell out funds, to finance the construction of the "Erap log cabin."

He said the documents were part of a paper trail supplied by one of 16 investors asked to participate in the John Hay project. Each of them was told to advance part of their shares to help pool the funds for the first log cabin.

Still no justice for war mass rape victims

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SOME of the Malaya Lolas revisit the Bahay na Pula in San Ildefonso, Bulacan. TONETTE OREJAS

SAN ILDEFONSO, Bulacan—Around 60 women revisited on Monday the Bahay na Pula (Red House), a stately red mansion in Barangay Anyatam here where they were repeatedly abused by Japanese soldiers 56 years ago.

"Six have already died. The rest are sick. They are too weak to stand up," said Isabelita Vinuya, one of the Malaya Lolas (old women who have freed themselves) in Barangay Mapanique in Candaba, Pampanga.

Amanda Regala, who was abused while she was in the same room where her daughter Maxima was also being raped, died in November 1999.

But Maxima, now 70, and the others who are still alive to tell stories of how they were violated and their self-dignity dishonored, came to say that they have yet to obtain justice.

Theirs is a belated public admission made in 1996. They were inspired by Gertrude Balisalisa, a "comfort woman" or one forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army.

"Our disclosure is not only to set ourselves free. We are sharing our experience so that the atrocities would not happen again. Women suffer so much in times of war," Vinuya said.

Mass rape

The 2nd Tank Division or Geki Heidan of the 14th Area Army under Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita converted the house owned by the Ilusorio clan into a garrison.

Here, the troops carried out the mass rape of the Mapanique women, whose ages ranged from 9 to 36 then, right after the "pillage, burning and massacre" in the village on Nov. 23, 1944.

Records obtained from war archives in Tokyo showed that the attack was meant to flush out Filipinos belonging to the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon (Hukbalahap), according to the Asian Center for Women's Human Rights (Ascent).

Ascent is an institution helping the victims of "rape, enforced prostitution, sexual slavery, sex trafficking and sexual violence of all kinds"—crimes that were "integrated in the conduct of most wars in world history," as countries like Japan went on an expansionist program.

Reluctance

For these grandmothers, there was always hesitation about coming back.

"Even if you give me bags and bags of money, I would not come here. I went only because I want to tell you what your fellow Japanese did to us, right here," Januaria Garcia, 65, told some 30 Japanese workers and students hosted by the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya for the Santama Peace Cycle 2001.

"The visit here reopens the wounds of a vicious past," Garcia said.

As every return was an occasion of confronting fear, it has also become an act of summoning more courage to pursue their cause for justice, Garcia said.

The war prevented her from pursuing an education, but Garcia has written poems, composed songs, talked before war crime tribunals to recount a past that they share, to speak of the savagery they did not want to happen again to the women beyond their generation.

Bitter memories

"Help us obtain justice," Garcia, who was barely 10 years old when she was abused, told the Japanese visitors.

The house—now decrepit, most of its windows and doors closed and its garden untended—has a scary, melancholic air to it. The rains made the day more gloomy.

She recalled:

"Starting 6 until 8:30 in the morning, the village was bombed. On the ground, the soldiers trained and fired their guns against us civilians.

"Those who survived were herded to the school compound. There, the men were mutilated, tortured until they died. There, we women and children, trembling and crying in fear, were made to watch the brutal killings and the burning of the school where the dead were thrown and burned.

"The houses were looted of everything, including food. Then, the entire village was set afire."

The women and the girls, according to Garcia, were made to carry the loot to the mansion.

Along the route, some were raped in rice paddies. Most were snatched as soon as they stepped into the gates of the garrison, dragged either to the tents or to the rooms upstairs where, always, it wasn't just one soldier who abused them.

"I heard the women weeping, wailing as they were being abused. We weren't spared even if we pleaded, even when were bleeding," she said.

" What they did to us was despicable," Garcia said.

Unlike the *jugun ianfu* or comfort women, the Mapanique women were "not confined for a longer period of time in any facility for sexual slavery," Ascent said.

Stigma

Many of them braved the risks of escaping, succeeding to evade their captors.

But they attested to enduring the stigma, of living with the nightmare and the pain that was made heavier by solitary anguish, Ascent said.

Ascent has documented the details and the tormenting effects of this mass rape on the women's lives in the book "The Women of Mapanique."

Published in December last year, the book was presented to the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo.

The alternative tribunal created by human rights organizations in Asian countries where war crimes were inflicted on women convicted Emperor Hirohito of Japan after hearing the case of Mapanique women and reviewing archival evidence of the assault, according to Susan Macabuag of Ascent.

The Japanese government has not accepted state responsibility for the crimes, Macabuag said.

5 lawyers face inquiry on 'payoffs'

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY–The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) will investigate five Cebu-based lawyers who were allegedly involved in payoffs that led to the dismissal of two cases related to the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) in Cebu.

Rolando Lim, past IBP governor for Eastern Visayas, was named chair of the IBP special investigating panel, with Francisco Mejares Jr. and Eric Carin as members.

The panel will investigate Achilles Cañete, Marcelo Tan, Gerardo Carillo, Edgar Gica and Elias Espinosa, IBP president for Cebu.

In a memorandum dated Feb. 21, Lim said the five lawyers would be investigated for possible violations of ethical rules or the Rules of Criminal Procedure in the settlement of the two VFA cases.

Cañete served as legal counsel of the parents of two boys who died in an explosion at an abandoned mine site in Barangay Don Andres in Toledo City that was used as venue for the joint RP-US war games.

Cousins Rolly Navales, 17, and Arnelo Gaviola, 13, were killed on Aug. 19 when the M-203 grenade that they found at the site exploded.

Their cousin, Jordan Villarmia, 10, was wounded.

The grenade was apparently left behind after the military exercise dubbed "Flash Piston."

Carillo was lawyer of taxi driver Marcelo Batestil who was allegedly mauled by three American sailors who were in Cebu in March last year for a "goodwill visit."

Criminal charges were filed against the three, as well as the 39 American and Filipino sailors involved in the Toledo war games.

The cases were dismissed after the victims signed affidavits of desistance.

Batestil and the parents said they were given P500,000 each in exchange for the dropping of the charges. They also said their lawyers had recommended the withdrawal of the cases.

Carillo refused to comment on the alleged payoff, saying he might breach lawyer-client confidentiality.

Cañete earlier admitted receiving P650,000 from the P1.5 million paid to his clients, Pedro and Victoria Navales and Anselmo and Remegia Gaviola, who are the parents of the blast victims, and Patricio Villarmia, Jordan's father.

He said his clients voluntarily gave him the money and that the entire amount did not go to him.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon, Visayas and Eastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated raishowers or thunderstorms

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila Hi 30° Lo 23°	Baguio Hi 23° Lo 15°	Tuguegarao Hi 31° Lo 21°
Laoag Hi 31° Lo 23°	Clark Zone Hi 29° Lo 22°	Tagaytay Hi 28° Lo 18°
Legazpi Hi 29° Lo 23°	Bacolod Hi 30° Lo 23°	Roxas Hi 30° Lo 24°
Cebu Hi 30° Lo 25°	Tacloban Hi 30° Lo 22°	Gen. Santos Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga Hi 31° Lo 24°	Cagayan de Oro Hi 32° Lo 23°	Davao Hi 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

PDI BUREAUS

Northern Luzon Bureau
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074) 443-9255
Fax No. (074) 443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com .ph

Southern Luzon Bureau
Barangay 34 (Oro site), Legazpi City
Tel. No . (052) 480-8099
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com .ph

Visayas Bureau
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346 / 233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

Mindanao Bureau
479-c General Luna St., Davao City
Tel. No. (082) 221-7122
Fax No. (082) 227-6723
E-mail: pdiminda@dv.weblinq.com

Zambo folk vote today on new province

PAGADIAN CITY—Residents of Zamboanga del Sur will vote today on the creation of the Zamboanga Sibugay province.

Teopisto Elnas, Commission on Elections director for Zamboanga del Sur, said the plebiscite would definitely push through after being postponed three times for lack of funds.

On Dec. 5 last year, then President Joseph Estrada signed Republic Act 8973 that paves the way for the conduct of the plebiscite.

If the yes vote wins, the new province shall be composed the 16 municipalities or the entire third congressional district of Zamboanga del Sur.

The towns are Alicia, Buug, Diplahan, Imelda, Mabuhay, Malangas, Payao, Talusan, Siya, Olutanga, Kabasalan, Naga, Ipil, Titay, Tungawan and R.T. Lim.

Zamboanga del Sur Gov. Romeo Vera Cruz said the creation of the new province would "spur economic growth" to both new and old provinces. *Hernan P. de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Release of Abra church worker urged

BAGUIO CITY—Human rights activists here renewed their appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to free a church worker accused of plotting the murder of rebel priest Conrado Balweg, after his own militia declared her innocence this week.

The President on Monday directed the release of 49 in a list of 250 inmates, which the Department of Justice had certified as legitimate political prisoners.

Arthur Allad-iw, spokesperson of the Cordillera Human Rights Organization (CHRO) here, said the list also included Lorna Rivera-Baba, an Abra-based social work volunteer of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI).

Baba was abducted by military agents last year only to surface later as the prime suspect in Balweg's murder.

Her case had tested the government's relationship with non-Catholic churches here when she was tagged among 14 church and nongovernment organization workers being linked to the Balweg murder.

Balweg was assassinated on Dec. 31, 1999 by a New People's Army unit led by his brother Jovencio at the family's house in Malibcong, Abra.

Gabino Ganggangan, secretary general of the Balweg-led Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), told the INQUIRER Tuesday that Baba and other church workers did not even turn up in their own investigation of their leader's murder.

"For us, it was just Bencio (Jovencio Balweg's nomenclature) and his men. The CPLA knew about the execution order on (Balweg's head) issued by the central committee (of the communist rebels), so we know who we are dealing with. We do not know Baba. The military will just be embarrassed by all these cases. They just want to close this case," he said.

The CPLA investigations have led to inactive rebel leaders, now based in Abra, who may have helped plot Balweg's 14-year-old execution order. *Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

17 Visayas detainees joining protest

CEBU CITY—Seventeen political prisoners in the Visayas are joining today's nationwide hunger strike of detainees to press their immediate release.

Of the number, 13 are in Bohol, two in Cebu and one each in Negros Oriental and Iloilo.

Dennis Abarientos of the human rights group Karapatan in Central Visayas said the detainees would not lift their hunger strike until they are freed.

He said the detainees were also demanding a cessation of military operations in the countryside.

President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered on Monday the release of 49 of 250 political prisoners to speed up efforts to revive the stalled peace talks with communist and Moro separatist groups.

Eleven of the 49 who were in the list and due for release are from Central Visayas. Six are from Bohol, two from Cebu and one from Negros Oriental.

It was not indicated when the prisoners would be freed. But Justice Secretary Hernani Perez gave assurance that the release would be made at the "soonest possible time."

Perez chairs the special committee that evaluates the cases of "persons detained or convicted of crimes committed in furtherance of political beliefs or objectives."

Militant groups have viewed as "selective" the government's move to release only 49 detainees.

Abarientos said the President should unconditionally release all political prisoners to show the government's sincerity in the peace process.

"All political prisoners must be released to provide a favorable climate for peace negotiations between the government and rebel groups," said Samuel Jaco, secretary general of Karapatan in Iloilo.

The two political prisoners in Cebu were identified as Arnulfo Cañedo and Aleson Alcantara. They are held at the Cebu Provincial Rehabilitation and Detention Center.

The lone detainee in Negros Oriental is Irene Valencia.

In Bohol, four of the six political detainees who are in the list of those to be freed are Lumalinda Daan, 18; Kim Michael Virador, 21; Romeo Pialan, 21; and Romualdo Muñez, 30. They are held at the Bohol Detention and Rehabilitation Center.

The two others are boys who, along with Daan, have been placed under government custody.

Of the remaining seven detainees in Bohol, six are out on bail.

In Iloilo City, the lone detainee has been tagged by the military as second highest ranking rebel leader in Panay Island.

Reynaldo Bocala, 55, is the alleged deputy secretary of the Panay Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines. He was captured Feb. 12 in a raid by policemen in Barangay Tapiac, Igbaras town. Three members of the New People's Army died in the clash. *Neston Burgos, Nagiel Bañacia and Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Students to help first-time voters

COTABATO CITY—A group of students here launched a region-wide program to help first-time voters choose good leaders in the May national and local elections.

Gilbys Joe Dequito, secretary general of the Student Council Alliance of the Philippines (SCAP), said the project hoped to raise the awareness of "first-timers" about the political system and the importance of an educated vote.

It also aims to equip the young with tools for analyzing the platforms and track records of candidates in deciding on their votes.

"The voting population in the country is getting younger," he said.

Citing National Statistics Office data, Dequito said NSO projections showed that the youth sector (15-29 years old) would comprise 21.7 million, equivalent to roughly 28 percent of the projected total population of the country.

He also cited Commission on Elections data showing that the youth would comprise 60 percent of the voting population this year.

"Of this, 4.8 million will be first-time voters, aged 18 to 21 years old," he said.

"There is a lack of critical information on how political decision making affects the lives of students, as well as those of out-of-school youths," he said. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Chavit 'meddling' worries pols

BAGUIO CITY—Whistleblower Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson has been competing with former Speaker Jose de Venecia in choosing provincial election lineups of the People Power Coalition, according to politicians.

Singson had reportedly bypassed many of the decisions of De Venecia, who chairs Lakas-NUCD, as well as the arbitration committee settling party conflicts.

"*Si* Chavit *nga ang* kingmaker *ngayon.* (Chavit is kingmaker today)," said Baguio Rep. Bernardo Vergara, a coordinator of the Nationalist People's Coalition, who is seeking Lakas' blessings to coalesce with their local slate.

It was Singson who allegedly blocked a "powerhouse" coalition in Baguio, supposedly one of the many "rainbow" coalition forces in Northern Luzon that unite politicians originally loyal to ousted President Joseph Estrada and the new administration coalition led by the Lakas-NUCD, Vergara claimed.

The Baguio "rainbow coalition" teams Vergara, who is running for mayor, with congressional aspirant, Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan, a Lakas regional coordinator here, and a slate of candidates belonging to Lakas, Reforma, and NPC.

Singson, in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER on Wednesday, admitted that he was asked by Lakas officials to help the party choose its local candidates in Northern Luzon.

While saying he has a hand in the recommendation of local candidates, Singson clarified that his recommendations were "not final" as Lakas officials would decide on the final provincial slates.

Political alliances between the Lakas-NUCD and the former Lapiang ng Masang Pilipino (LAMP) of Estrada were prohibited by De Venecia in January. The NPC was a member of LAMP before it bolted in January to put up its own slate.

De Venecia was the engineer of the original "rainbow coalition" formula in 1992, which supported the Philippines 2000 legislative agenda of then President Fidel V. Ramos.

Vergara was one of De Venecia's lieutenants at the time.

But De Venecia's directive had not been carried out. Ramos himself reportedly gave his blessings to the Baguio "rainbow" tandem on Saturday, offering other alliances in Northern Luzon a precedent in working for their own financial support from the party directorate.

Edgar Avila, another contender for Lakas sponsorship, announced Ramos' decision over a radio broadcast on Monday. He complained that Ramos undermined the party's principles.

Vergara said Ramos gave his blessings to the "rainbow coalition forces" two weeks ago.

"*Ayokong makialam sa problema ng* Lakas (I do not want to interfere in the affairs of Lakas) because I was already authorized by NPC to coalesce with Lakas," he said.

But Singson remains a formidable influence in the selection process, he admitted.

Vergara said Singson was backing several candidates for Lakas support, including his lawyer, former Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) chair Pablito Sanidad.

Sanidad is reportedly running for Baguio's lone congressional seat, along with a slate of activists and business leaders.

"Singson is not even Lakas. He is from Billeg (a homegrown Ilocos party), but I think he has alliances with Lakas," Vergara said.

He said De Venecia's only chance to outmaneuver Singson would be through the arbitration council. *Vincent Cabreza, with a report from Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Local bets hit campaign trail early

By BEN MOSES EBREO
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Local candidates have been attending various village events in a bid to gain popularity and support from residents and endorsement by influential families.

Although the official campaign period for local candidates has yet to start, provincial and municipal candidates have been at mass gatherings dubbed "KBL," for *kasalan* (wedding), *binyagan* (baptism) and *lamayan* (wake), in various vote-rich villages here.

Other politicians have also been visible during Sunday Masses in different churches. They position themselves outside near the church doors to shake hands with churchgoers after the Mass.

Political observers coined KBL to refer to the surprise attendance of politicians in village events.

"These are clear insinuations that their visibility is intended to boost their popularity and name recall," said Hilda Padilla, election assistant of the Commission on Elections here.

She noted that the Filipinos tended to mix politics, tradition and social obligation.

"The practice is not prohibited because of the social and traditional factors attached to its foremost intention," she explained.

But for voters and local candidates, politics is still a major subject because of poverty and other development issues in the villages.

"Because of their diverse interests and development ideas, the residents find it interesting to communicate with the politicians, and the politicians are also interested to hear feedback from them," a political observer said.

Windfall

"Practically, the political candidates' appearance is welcomed in most cases by the host families who expect financial and social benefits if their sponsors win," said Linda Absalon, 52.

But some also accused politicians of abusing several occasions to further their interests.

"What is very unusual is for several candidates insisting that they stand as sponsors in weddings and baptisms," a resident of Solano town said.

Villagers here have also expressed disgust over the candidates' exploitation of wakes for their "silent campaigns."

"These politicians go where the people are. They introduce themselves to people and share a drink even though they are not related whatsoever to the bereaved families," Joewenie Subayno, 34, a government employee, said.

In community gatherings, people also complained of politicians getting special treatment in terms of partaking of *pulutan* (appetizers) during social drinking. "They are the ones celebrating instead of us," said Bernard Osorio, 36, a store owner, of Bambang town.

But in Quezon town, a wealthy mayoral candidate has become a favorite sponsor in weddings and baptismal parties among poor families because he donates a pig to every occasion he is invited.

Community organizations also consider the season an opportunity to ask help from politicians for projects.

Davao del Sur cops tag 44 hot spots

DIGOS CITY—Despite strong protests from Gov. Rogelio Llanos, the police provincial office declared 44 barangays in Davao del Sur election hot spots.

Supt. Guillermo Lara, provincial police chief, said these could become "areas of concern" to the police even in the absence of intense political rivalries there.

"The reported presence of the New People's Army or any other group that can threaten the conduct of a peaceful election in an area is enough for us to list it as an area of concern," Lara said.

Last week, Llanos said he could not find any reason for the Commission on Elections regional office to tag hot spots in several villages in most of the province's 15 towns.

"I have been governor here for some time and I have not heard of any political rivalry that resulted in killings," Llanos said.

But Lara said the police were not inclined to recall their declaration of hot spots because of persistent reports on the presence of armed groups.

"Unless we are sure that there is no threat on the conduct of the elections, these areas will be identified as they are," he said.

Most of the villages are situated in the hinterlands. Some are near the provincial border with South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and North Cotabato.

Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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- Intel® Pentium® III processor 866MHz
- 128MB SDRAM
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Republic of the Philippines

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

Intramuros, Manila

NUMBER AND ALLOCATION OF ELECTIVE MEMBERS OF SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD AND SANGGUNIANG BAYAN FOR PURPOSES OF THE MAY 14, 2001 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.
x---x

PRESENT:

JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	**Acting Chairman**
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.,	**Commissioner**
LANTION, Ralph C.,	**Commissioner**
SADAIN, Mehol K.,	**Commissioner**

Promulgated: 13 February 2001

RESOLUTION NO. 3620

WHEREAS, after the May 11, 1998 national and local elections, several municipalities have been converted into cities and others have been created, thus:

A. CONVERTED INTO A CITY:

REGION	PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITY
I	Ilocos Sur	Vigan
II	Cagayan	Tuguegarao
III	Bataan	Balanga
	Bulacan	San Jose del Monte
	Nueva Ecija	Muñoz
	Pampanga	San Fernando
V	Masbate	Masbate
VII	Cebu	Talisay
	Negros Oriental	Bayawan
VIII	Southern Leyte	Maasin
X	Bukidnon	Valencia
XI	Davao del Sur	Digos
	South Cotabato	Koronadal
	Surigao del Sur	Bislig
XI	Sultan Kudarat	Tacurong

B. NEWLY CREATED MUNICIPALITIES:

REGION	PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITY
ARMM	MAGUINDANAO	Mamasapano
-do-	-do-	Talitay
-do-	-do-	Pagagawan

WHEREAS, the conversion of the above-named municipalities into component cities as well as the creation of the new municipalities have been ratified in the plebiscites conducted for the purpose;

WHEREAS, in addition the municipalities of Bacon and Sorsogon, both in the province of Sorsogon, have been merged and converted into a city, and their merging and conversion have been ratified in the plebiscite conducted for the purpose;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 8806 entitled *"An Act Creating the City of Sorsogon By Merging the Municipalities of Bacon and Sorsogon in the Province of Sorsogon and Appropriating Funds Therefor"* provides for, among others, twelve (12) regular *sanggunian* members to be elected by districts with each district electing four (4) members;

WHEREAS, in view of the above, there is need to fix the number of elective members of *sangguniang panlungsod* and *sangguniang bayan* for purposes of the May 14, 2001 national and local elections;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Acts No. 6636, 7166, 7887 and other election laws, the Commission **RESOLVED** as it hereby **RESOLVES** to fix the number of elective members of the *sangguniang panlungsod* and *sangguniang bayan* nationwide as shown in Annex "A" hereof, which annex shall form an integral part of this Resolution.

Let the Education and Information Department publish this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines, and to furnish copies thereof to all Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors and Election Officers.

SO ORDERED.

RUFINO S.B. JAVIER
Acting Chairman

LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO
Commissioner

RALPH C. LANTION
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

NUMBER OF SEATS OF SANGGUNIANG PANGLUNSOD

May 14, 2001 National and Local Elections

REGION	PROVINCE	Cities whose voters *do not participate* in the election for provincial officials	Cities whose voters *participate in the* election for provincial officials	DISTRICT APPORTIONMENT							Remarks
				Total	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	
NCR											
		City of Manila (6 LD)		36	6	6	6	6	6	6	
		Quezon City (4 LD)		24	6	6	6	6			
		Kalookan City (2 LD)		12	6	6					
		Pasay City (1 LD)		12	6	6					
		Mandaluyong City (1 LD)		12	6	6					
		Pasig City (1 LD)		12	6	6					
		Makati City (2 LD)		16	8	8					MR. No. 2930, 9/8/97
		Muntinlupa City (1 LD)		12	6	6					
		Marikina City (1 LD)		12	6	6					
		Las Piñas City (1 LD)		12	6	6					
		Parañaque City (1 LD)		12	6	6					RA 8507
		Valenzuela City (2 LD)		12	6	6					RA 8526
CAR											
	BENGUET										
		Baguio City (1 LD)		12							
REGION I											
	ILOCOS NORTE										
			Laoag City	10							
	ILOCOS SUR										
			Vigan City	10							RA 8988
	LA UNION										
			San Fernando City	12							RA 8509
	PANGASINAN										
		Dagupan City*		10							
			San Carlos City	10							
			Urdaneta City	10							RA 8480
REGION II											
	CAGAYAN										
			Tuguegarao City	12							RA 8455
	ISABELA										
		Santiago City*		10							Min Res 2757
REGION III											
	BATAAN										
			Balanga City	10							RA 8984
	BULACAN										
			San Jose del Monte City	10							RA 8797
	NUEVA ECIJA										
			Cabanatuan City	10							
			Palayan City	10							
			San Jose City	10							
			Science City of Muñoz	10							RA 8977
	PAMPANGA										
		Angeles City*		10							
			San Fernando City	10							
	TARLAC										
			Tarlac City	10							RA 8593
	ZAMBALES CITY										
		Olongapo City*		10							
REGION IV											
	BATANGAS										
			Batangas City	10							
			Lipa City	10							
	CAVITE										
			Cavite City	10							
			Tagaytay City	10							
			Trece Martires City	10							
	LAGUNA										
			San Pablo City	10							
	ORIENTAL MINDORO										
			Calapan City	10							RA 8475
	PALAWAN										
			Puerto Princesa City	10							
	QUEZON										
			Lucena City	10							
	RIZAL										
			Antipolo City	12	6	6					RA 8508
REGION V											
	ALBAY										
			Legaspi City	10							
	CAMARINES SUR										
			Iriga City	10							
		Naga City*		10							
	MASBATE										
			Masbate City	10							RA 8807
	SORSOGON										
			Sorsogon City	12	4	4	4				RA 8806

NUMBER OF SEATS OF SANGGUNIANG PANGLUNSOD

May 14, 2001 National and Local Elections

REGION	PROVINCE	Cities whose voters *do not participate* in the election for provincial officials	Cities whose voters *participate in the* election for provincial officials	DISTRICT APPORTIONMENT							Remarks
				Total	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	
REGION VI											
	CAPIZ										
			Roxas City	10							
	ILOILO										
		Iloilo City (1 LD)		12							
			Passi City	10							RA 8469
	NEGROS OCCIDENTAL										
		Bacolod City (1 LD)		12							
			Bago City	10							
			Cadiz City	10							
			Kabankalan City	10							
			La Carlota City	10							
			Sagay City	10							
			San Carlos City	10							
			Silay City	10							
			Talisay City	10							RA 8489
			Victorias City	10							RA 8488
REGION VII											
	BOHOL										
			Tagbilaran City	10							
	CEBU										
		Cebu City (2 LD)		16	8	8					
			Danao City	10							
			Lapu-Lapu City	10							
			Mandaue City	10							
			Talisay City	10							RA 8979
			Toledo City	10							
	NEGROS ORIENTAL										
			Bais City	10							
			Bayawan City	10							RA 8983
			Dumaguete City	10							
			Canlaon City	10							
REGION VIII											
	LEYTE										
		Ormoc City*		10							
			Tacloban City	10							
	SAMAR										
			Calbayog	12	6	6					
	SOUTHERN LEYTE										
			Maasin City	10							RA 8796
REGION IX											
	ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE										
			Dapitan City	10							
			Dipolog City	10							
	ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR										
			Pagadian City	10							
		Zamboanga City (1 LD)		12							
REGION X											
	BUKIDNON										
			Malaybalay City	10							RA 8490
			Valencia City	10							RA 8985
	MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL										
			Oroquieta City	10							
			Ozamis City	10							
			Tangub City	10							
	MISAMIS ORIENTAL										
		Cagayan de Oro (1 LD)		12							
			Gingoog City	10							
REGION XI											
	DAVAO DEL NORTE										
			Tagum City		10						RA 8472
			Is. Garden City of Samal		12	4	4	4			RA 8471
	DAVAO DEL SUR										
		Davao City (3 LD)		24	8	8	8				
			Digos City	10							RA 8798
	SOUTH COTABATO										
		Gen. Santos City*		12							
			Koronadal City	10							RA 8803
REGION XII											
	LANAO DEL NORTE										
		Iligan City*		10							
	COTABATO										
			City of Kidapawan	10							RA 8500
	LANAO DEL SUR										
			Marawi City	10							
	MAGUINDANAO										
		Cotabato City*		10							
	SULTAN KUDARAT										
			Tacurong City	10							RA 8805
REGION XIII											
	AGUSAN DEL NORTE										
		Butuan City*		10							
	SURIGAO DEL NORTE										
			Surigao City	10							
	SURIGAO DEL SUR										
			City of Bislig	10							RA 8804

* does not participate in the election for provincial officials but vote for member of the HR

NUMBER OF SEATS OF SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

May 14, 2001 National and Local Elections

REGION/PROVINCE/ MUNICIPALITY	Classification	District Apportionment			Remarks
		Total	1st District	2nd District	
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION					
Malabon (1 LD)	1st Class	12	6	6	
Navotas	1st Class	12	6	6	
Pateros	4th Class	12	6	6	RA 7887
San Juan (1 LD)	1st Class	12	6	6	
Taguig (1 LD)	1st Class	12	6	6	

NOTE: All other municipalities outside Metro Manila shall each have 8 councilors to be elected at large.

NUMBER OF SEATS OF SANGGUNIANG PANGLUNSOD

May 14, 2001 National and Local Elections

REGION	PROVINCE	Cities whose voters *do not participate* in the election for provincial officials	Cities whose voters *participate in the* election for provincial officials	DISTRICT APPORTIONMENT							Remarks
				Total	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	
REGION VI											
	CAPIZ										
			Roxas City	10							
	ILOILO										
		Iloilo City (1 LD)		12							
			Passi City	10							RA 8469
	NEGROS OCCIDENTAL										
		Bacolod City (1 LD)		12							
			Bago City	10							
			Cadiz City	10							
			Kabankalan City	10							
			La Carlota City	10							
			Sagay City	10							
			San Carlos City	10							
			Silay City	10							
			Talisay City	10							RA 8489
			Victorias City	10							RA 8488
REGION VII											
	BOHOL										
			Tagbilaran City	10							
	CEBU										
		Cebu City (2 LD)		16	8	8					
			Danao City	10							
			Lapu-Lapu City	10							
			Mandaue City	10							
			Talisay City	10							RA 8979
			Toledo City	10							
	NEGROS ORIENTAL										
			Bais City	10							
			Bayawan City	10							RA 8983
			Dumaguete City	10							
			Canlaon City	10							
REGION VIII											
	LEYTE										
		Ormoc City*		10							
			Tacloban City	10							
	SAMAR										
			Calbayog	12	6	6					
	SOUTHERN LEYTE										
			Maasin City	10							RA 8796
REGION IX											
	ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE										
			Dapitan City	10							
			Dipolog City	10							
	ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR										
			Pagadian City	10							
		Zamboanga City (1 LD)		12							
REGION X											
	BUKIDNON										
			Malaybalay City	10							RA 8490
			Valencia City	10							RA 8985
	MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL										
			Oroquieta City	10							
			Ozamis City	10							
			Tangub City	10							
	MISAMIS ORIENTAL										
		Cagayan de Oro (1 LD)		12							
			Gingoog City	10							
REGION XI											
	DAVAO DEL NORTE										
			Tagum City		10						RA 8472
			Is. Garden City of Samal		12	4	4	4			RA 8471
	DAVAO DEL SUR										
		Davao City (3 LD)		24	8	8	8				
			Digos City	10							RA 8798
	SOUTH COTABATO										
		Gen. Santos City*		12							
			Koronadal City	10							RA 8803
REGION XII											
	LANAO DEL NORTE										
		Iligan City*		10							
	COTABATO										
			City of Kidapawan	10							RA 8500
	LANAO DEL SUR										
			Marawi City	10							
	MAGUINDANAO										
		Cotabato City*		10							
	SULTAN KUDARAT										
			Tacurong City	10							RA 8805
REGION XIII											
	AGUSAN DEL NORTE										
		Butuan City*		10							
	SURIGAO DEL NORTE										
			Surigao City	10							
	SURIGAO DEL SUR										
			City of Bislig	10							RA 8804

* does not participate in the election for provincial officials but vote for member of the HR

NUMBER OF SEATS OF SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

May 14, 2001 National and Local Elections

REGION/PROVINCE/ MUNICIPALITY	Classification	District Apportionment			Remarks
		Total	1st District	2nd District	
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION					
Malabon (1 LD)	1st Class	12	6	6	
Navotas	1st Class	12	6	6	
Pateros	4th Class	12	6	6	RA 7887
San Juan (1 LD)	1st Class	12	6	6	
Taguig (1 LD)	1st Class	12	6	6	

NOTE: All other municipalities outside Metro Manila shall each have 8 councilors to be elected at large.

GMA asks 'Kabalens' to vote 13-0

(From page A1)

Estrada's candidates in 1998.

The next night, in San Fernando, it was Ms Macapagal's turn to predict victory.

The President, in a yellow pantsuit and color-coordinated sandals, reminded the crowd gathered in front of the San Fernando municipal hall that she had handpicked the candidates from numerous aspirants lobbying for inclusion in the administration slate.

The PPC is composed of the Lakas-NUCD and other parties whose leaders all helped in coaxing the groundswell of opposition against Estrada.

'Exception'

Pampanga, according to Ms Macapagal, was an exception to her promise not to campaign aggressively for the candidates, although she has already done so in Cavite.

She added that she would not mind if the entire PPC slate did not make it in other provinces, as long as it won in her home province.

"In other areas, perhaps I would not mind. What is important is that here in Pampanga, the people will vote solidly for the PPC slate for the sake of new politics and the birth of a new leadership," she said.

On the ticket are re-electionist Senators Franklin Drilon, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Juan Flavier and Sergio Osmeña III; economist Solita Monsod, former internal revenue commissioner Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, lawyer Francis Pangilinan, Representatives Joker Arroyo, Ralph Recto, Manuel Villar and Ernesto Herrera; and former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pag-danganan.

The President, who arrived at 9 p.m., signed into law a measure declaring San Fernando the 99th Philippine city in the presence of her "*kabalens*."

End of the storm?

In a speech yesterday to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the President said she wanted to "veer away" from the "politics of personality and patronage and promote the new politics of programs and institutionalized consultations."

"That is why we have put together a set of senatorial candidates, not all of them world-famous, but they consist of parties and individual newcomers committed to the cause and spirit of Edsa II," she told her audience, which included some of the country's top business leaders.

PCCI president Miguel Varela, whose organization used to staunchly support Estrada, said the businessmen welcomed the prospect of good governance and were optimistic about economic recovery.

"'There is a general feeling that we have seen the end of the storm, we certainly hope that the crisis we were all afraid of is now behind us," Varela said.

Pinning her hopes

Ms Macapagal told the business group that she was "pinning my hopes on this coalition as a start to what I often refer to as the 'new politics' where reason, not charm prevails, and the determining factor for one's choice are . . . programs and policies."

In a prepared speech, the President said her government had "begun our task of rebuilding the economy" by trying to reduce "the budget deficit this year from the expected P225 billion to P145 billion through improvements in tax effort and prudent public spending."

She said the government was also reviewing and fast-tracking the passage of structural reforms to further strengthen investor confidence, including legislation to strengthen the banking sector, enhance the country's investment climate and improve competition in industries.

"As recovery gathers strength, thé economy will be able to generate high-wage and high-skill jobs," the President said.

Enrile makes a promise

On Monday afternoon, Ejercito and the six other senatorial candidates showed up at the jampacked Balane gymnasium at Barangay Bitas in Cabanatuan City, where some 4,000 leaders of Balane, led by party chair Gov. Tomas Joson III, gathered to hear campaign speeches.

Joson was among those who stayed loyal to the former president and were with him during his last days in Malacañang.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III, the opposition ticket's campaign manager and a native of Nueva Ecija, introduced the candidates and started his speech by thanking the people of Nueva Ecija for supposedly sticking by the Estrada camp.

Those who came were Ejercito, lawyer Ricardo Puno Jr., former presidential adviser Jamby Madrigal, former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara, former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and Ombra Tamano.

In their speeches, the candidates kept on repeating the words "*walang iwanan* (no defections)."

"We know that the fight is over here. We know that you will not abandon us. So, Governor Joson, just tell us, when we shall have already officially won the elections, what your province needs, and we will help Nueva Ecija," Enrile told the crowd.

Ejercito asked the crowd, "*Gusto ba ninyong makulong si Pangulong Erap* (Would you like President Erap to be jailed)?" The crowd shouted back: "*Hindi! Hindi!* (No! No!)" ***With a report from Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

No kidding, Joker the legal eagle has stage fright

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

JOKER Arroyo, the lion of the House prosecution panel in the impeachment trial of Joseph Estrada, has stage fright.

And unless the would-be senator licks it as soon as possible, Arroyo has a handicap that threatens to jeopardize his campaign.

The televised impeachment trial that ran for about one-and-a-half months gave Arroyo a clear edge in exposure over other members of the People Power Coalition slate.

The "star prosecutor," as his drum beaters describe him, usually gets the loudest applause when all PPC bets are introduced onstage during rallies.

The three-term Makati congressman also receives the most number of requests for autographs and is often pulled aside by fans wanting to pose with him for pictures.

But nervousness sets in as soon as he goes onstage, Arroyo admitted. "I'm not used to facing crowds," he shyly complained.

Observers find this explanation surprising coming from the human rights lawyer who braved the wrath of two former presidents, Estrada and the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Arroyo questioned Ferdinand Marcos' martial law edict before the Supreme Court.

But "the impeachment court is very different from a rally. It's a court thing and I'm used to that. I'm used to appearing before the SC so many times," he said.

"A rally, yes, it is also live, but it is also so public! It's an election, so you have to convince so many people, not just the judge. It's a very different ballgame," he said.

Speakers at political rallies are usually presented on a first-come-first-served basis. The candidate who arrives first gets to talk first.

Not so in Arroyo's case. For instance, at the PPC rally in Angeles City, Pampanga, on Tuesday night, he gave way to several others before taking the stage.

When his turn came, Arroyo walked slowly toward the emcee as if unsure whether he should take the microphone.

"*Sa totoo lang, ninenerbiyos ako dito*," he told the crowd.

"Joker! Joker!" they responded with delight.

At a later sortie in San Fernando, people stopped Arroyo several times as he was leaving to shake his hand and pose with him for pictures.

"I like the spontaneity but, I don't know, I get uncomfortable," he told the INQUIRER later.

"I think I'll get used to it. I'm waiting for the moment when I get the feel of what to say and how to (say) it," Arroyo added.

'Filipino time' bugs Gloria

By Donna S. Cueto

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo, known to be a stickler for punctuality, has realized the difficulty of breaking down that bad habit called "Filipino time."

She admitted yesterday to having learned her lesson on several occasions where she was invited to speak. She would arrive, as usual, on the dot—and discover that there were not enough people around yet to start the program.

One such event, she said, was the Manila Standard's 14th anniversary celebration at which she was the guest of honor.

The event was held at the Century Park Hotel in Malate, Manila.

"I try my best to be punctual. If I'm invited at 7:30, I come at 7:30. But one time, I came to the Manila Standard at 7 (p.m.), and nobody was there. So I left again to host another dinner," the President recalled at a press forum at La Dolce Fontana Restaurant in Greenhills, San Juan.

Now she knows that when she is the guest of honor and the other guests "are not always so punctual," it is best not to arrive on time, she said.

What she does is send an advance party—usually a team from the Presidential Security Group—to check if the people are ready to "receive" her.

"Well, that's what I have an advance party for," the President said.

She added: "I told the new PSG head, Col. (Glen) Rabonza, 'Let me know if they're not yet complete because I don't want to walk in and then walk out again because people are not all there yet.'"

Ms Macapagal said all these by way of explaining why she was a few minutes late for her engagement at the forum of the Greenhills Walking Corporation at La Dolce Fontana.

The event was scheduled at 7:30 a.m., but there were not enough people around at the time and some of the Cabinet members were just starting to trickle in.

She herself arrived at 8:10 a.m.

"So like today, we were monitoring when the crowd was ready to receive me. And that's why I came here at 8:10 rather than 8 o'clock, as I said I would," she said.

However, the President said, these were the few exceptions to her policy of punctuality.

She stressed that it was still important for her and the members of her Cabinet to be punctual.

"Our Cabinet meetings start at 9 a.m., not at 12 p.m.," she said, an apparent swipe at her disgraced predecessor, Joseph Estrada, and his so-called "Midnight Cabinet."

"And (the meetings) finish at 11 or 11:30 a.m. In two-and-a-half hours, we cover such important decisions as the Somo," she said.

She was referring to the suspension of military offensives against the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, with which the government will soon resume peace negotiations.

The President said she was happy that her Cabinet members had been able to comply with her policy on punctuality.

She said that their "working day" started at 8 a.m., "and not at 2 p.m.," and that Cabinet meetings were being held weekly.

"That's why all the Cabinet members have good team work. Each one knows what the other is doing because we meet every week," she noted.

Ms Macapagal also disclosed her habit of calling her officials "at all times of day and night."

This, she said, was in accordance with the motto of "not putting off for tomorrow what can be done today."

'RP, mother of all people power actions'

(From page A1)

volt that toppled the late Ferdinand Marcos in February 1986.

"It triggered people power movements around the world," he added, noting that "after Edsa I, the eastern satellite countries of the old USSR started their own people power movement."

The former President also said that People Power I and II, though they happened nearly 15 years apart, should not be viewed as separate incidents but as part of the century-old struggle of Filipinos for independence.

"This is the continuing revolution. We are not yet fully there. Edsa I and Edsa II are merely the benchmarks of our progress toward full, mature and independent nationhood," he said in an interview.

"Edsa I and Edsa II must not be seen as separate incidents. This is a seamless continuum of our national development that started when the first Filipinos started to resist and struggle against foreign invasion," he told the INQUIRER. Ramos gave the interview before leaving for Osaka, Japan, where he is scheduled to address an international forum on "Asia Looking to the Future." He is expected to return to Manila on Feb. 24 to participate in the commemoration of People Power I the next day.

The popular uprising started on Feb. 22, 1986, when hundreds of thousands trooped to Edsa to protect Ramos and other military and defense officials who had withdrawn support for Marcos and holed themselves up in Camp Aguinaldo. Marcos and his family fled the country on Feb. 26, 1986.

The spirit of People Power I dated back to the Filipinos' struggle for independence from Spanish colonizers and later, from American forces, Ramos stressed.

To prevent a rerun of the two bloodless revolts, Ramos said there was a need to strengthen democratic institutions in the country.

This, he said, could be achieved if the people would shun patronage politics in the coming national elections.

"People should vote wisely. They must reject candidates who try to buy their votes," said Ramos, chair emeritus of the Lakas-NUCD, the leading party in the administration's People Power Coalition.

Ramos also dismissed ousted President Joseph Estrada's claim that "mob rule" catapulted Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo into power.

"There's no such thing as mob rule in the Philippines. It's People Power. That's the strength of Philippine civil society," he said.

"Please do not be mesmerized by some of these slogans being used by western writers or Filipino writers influenced by western philosophy."

In an article published in the Feb. 19 issue of Time magazine, Estrada described People Power II as "swift justice indeed—as in a lynching."

Flavier says Miriam incurably lovable

(From page A1)

But he claimed yesterday that he had also said "lovable" to describe Santiago but that the reporters had not quoted that portion of his remarks.

He said he tried to talk to Santiago to explain what appeared to be a personal attack attributed to him during a press conference with reporters at the rally of the People Power Coalition in the Pampanga capital.

Santiago was in no mood to be humored by the Senate's resident jester. So, he was only able to speak to her husband, Interior Undersecretary Narciso "Jun" Santiago.

"He also felt bad," Flavier said of the senator's husband.

Flavier said the media did not quote him completely, which resulted in the negative image he had given of Santiago.

Joke only

"I really said incurable jokingly," Flavier said, adding there was a second part which was very positive.

"I said there was no need to cure Miriam of her exciting and fighting stance because that is what makes her lovable. But they (media) cut it," he said.

Flavier said the reporters posed the question in jest: If you are a good doctor, why are you unable to cure Miriam?

He simply joked back, he said.

"So please, if you can put the whole quote so that she will no longer kill me," Flavier pleaded.

The INQUIRER reporter covering the PPC press conference on Tuesday explained that she had not cut out any of the remarks Flavier made.

After Flavier made the "incurable" remarks, the microphone had been passed on to another candidate, according to reporter Cathy Yamsuan.

Flavier is one of the 13 candidates of the administration's PPC while Santiago is running under the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino.

Yamsuan did hear Flavier say "lovable" at one point after the press conference and after they had left the San Fernando capitol where the meeting with the press was held. But Yamsuan said she was unaware in what context Flavier said lovable.

The only other doctor

The only other doctor elected to the Senate the past 50 years, Flavier was kinder to another lady on the campaign trail, his counterpart in the opposition ticket of Puwersa ng Masa, former first lady Dr. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito Estrada.

Dr. Ejercito was now reaping the fruits of her medical missions when her husband was still in Malacañang, Flavier noted.

"She made very dramatic excursions through her medical missions. She practically covered the whole Philippines and her missions were comprehensive. She took the entire PGH (Philippine General Hospital) complement and those who needed surgery are taken to Manila," he said.

"But whether that can carry her to the Senate is a big question," Flavier said. And he was not being funny.

GMA reveals support . . .

(From page A1)

"I am making this public for the first time," President Macapagal declared at the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa) celebration which honored key players of People Power II with a People's Heroes Award.

When it came to thanking the military, M$ Macapagal stopped the teleprompter to speak extemporaneously "to tell my own version of some of the untold stories, and especially with regard to the military."

The President said that the five groups who offered their support from January to November 2000 up to the time she assumed the presidency "didn't know about one another."

First, she talked to a group headed by Deputy Director Leandro Mendoza, then the head of the Transnational Crimes based in Camp Crame. Mendoza is now the acting chief of the Philippine National Police.

"Way back in January, in the BW scandal and its aftermath, that was when some activists, some priests and their friends introduced me to a group who were already then working for eventual withdrawal of support.

"And now that it can be told, I think I should mention who they are. That group that I was meeting with since January was made up of Gen. Larry Mendoza and Col. C.B. Garcia and retired Gen. ... (inaudible)," the President said.

"This is the first time I am revealing this in public," she added.

Sometime middle of last year, Ms Macapagal said she met with the brother of former President Cory Aquino, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco in his house in Dasmariñas Village, Makati. There she was informed, the President recalled, that a hiding place had been arranged for her in Hacienda Luisita with Northern Luzon Command chief Gen. Arturo Cerrillo guarding her.

"When I came back from my trip (Rome), during which I resigned from the Cabinet . . . and Peping Cojuangco wanted to meet with me and I did. I met him in his house and he told me about some of his friends in the military.

And he said that if danger should come and you need to hide, we will arrange a hiding place for you and he said you can hide in Luisita and you will be guided by the head of Nolcom and he said that his name is . . . Art Cerillo...

"Gen. (Alberto) Braganza is another friend of mine. We used to play golf together when he was the commander in Camp Aguinaldo. When he got his star as general, he was sent to Southcom to be the deputy of Gen. (Edgardo) Espinosa who, as everybody knows, was my dear friend..."

Around Nov. 4, Ms Macapagal recounted she met with a group close to AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes. Reyes' chief of staff, Col. Victor Corpus, began talking with Ms Macapagal's senior aide Col. Charlie Braganza.

Later (Braganza) was transferred to Nolcom . . . and thats when he became a . . . plotter in the crime together with Gen. Art Cerillo.

"At about that time too, I must give credit to Col. Victor Corpus. It was about that time when the Chief of Staff (Reyes) and I was beginning to communicate with each other.

"The middle man in behalf of General Reyes, Col. Victor Corpus, was his chief of staff; and in my behalf, Col Charlie Braganza who was my senior aide. And we were talking, but the problem was when would be the moment of truth.

"The moment of truth was almost Nov. 4 . . . but many events intervened . . . many things were discovered . . many spies were found out to be talking to both of us . . . so everything had to stop in the meantime...

"And then later on President Ramos introduced me to another group . . . and this was the group of Gen. Jun Ebdane and also Special Operations Commander Gen. Jonep Santiago and I said 'wow' this is because the special operations commander is the head of the special forces and the scout ranger," the President recalled.

Ebdane was then the head of the Directorate for Human Resources and Development and Doctrination based in Camp Crame.

Part of this group was the chief of the AFP's special operations battalion headed by Gen. Jonette Santiago, together with PNP Generals Victor Signey and Clyde Fernandez. Both were intelligence group directors who were then on "floating" status during the Estrada administration. "Just like Gen. Fianza," the President noted.

Finally, Ms Macapagal said Gov Luis "Chavit" Singson introduced her to a group of officers headed by Gen Edgardo Espinosa and Col. Reynaldo Berroya in a hotel.

"Lo and behold it was my old friend Gen. Edgardo Espinosa," the President said of the "big shot" Singson said he was going to deliver to the then Vice President..

Espinosa headed the AFP Joint Command Staff College. Berroya, who had been convicted of kidnapping and served time in prison until the Supreme Court reversed the lower court's decision, was then on "floating" status in Mindanao after his reinstatement in the PNP.

"I must also mention General Berroya . . . this is not yet proclamation, col., but that will come . . . Col. Berroya was always there, always making sure that his friends in the RAM will always be together with us. So did I mention already the five groups. Did I mention Spine (Espinosa), Angie (Reyes), Ebdane, Mendoza and Berroya. So, those are the five I was talking to.

"And then on a Friday, Jan. 19th, Rene de Villa who knew I was talking to several groups but didn't know who all of them were, told me that we've got to make this thing happen this coming week and all of these groups will have to know each other's existence . . . the time for secrecy is now over...

"But he was telling me that at 12 noon on Jan. 19, and I said OK Rene, therefore, I'm going to see Angie Reyes and so I went to Angie Reyes who was waiting for me in a safe house and the rest is history.

"I thank all these five groups of gentlemen and officers. All of you have your great contributions to make as all the other participants that we honor tonight..." ***With reports from Armand Nocum and Alcuin Papa***

Angry Marines force Navy chief to retire

(From page A1)

relief of Wong, who, as Navy chief, is their superior. According to reports reaching the INQUIRER, Wong has been forced to retire effective March 1, nine months earlier than scheduled.

This was confirmed last night by an officer from the AFP General Headquarters, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Neither Wong nor Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Librado Ladia could be reached for comment.

Military insiders said Wong had wanted to impose reforms in the procurement system but somehow managed to anger the Marines when he cited previous cases of irregularities during a visit to the corps headquarters last week.

Wong has been mentioned as one of the "long-shot" candidates for the post of AFP chief of staff that Gen. Angelo Reyes will vacate on March 17.

Insiders said Wong particularly wanted to stop the so-called "conversion," wherein funds programmed for a purchase are converted to cash for the purchase of another item or for use for another purpose.

"(When the funds are) converted to cash, temptation easily arises," said a ranking military officer who is familiar with the practice. "Admiral Wong wanted that if, for example, boots are programmed for purchase, actual boots will arrive for the troops," the officer said.

The officer, who requested that he not be named, cited a case when the Marine Corps ordered Kevlar helmets, a type said to be superior in quality to steel ones.

"According to reports, what arrived were helmets that were not really Kevlar," the officer said, adding:

"There's been talk that a number of Marines may have died in the field because of inadequate head protection."

Faith

Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the row was being "handled well by the Armed Forces."

Asked if he had a message for the Marines, Ermita said: "They must have faith in the chain of command."

AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Generoso Senga said Reyes had reported the case to President Macapagal-Arroyo and assured her that "the kinks will be ironed out soon."

"General Reyes has acted upon the problem," Senga said. "It will be dealt with."

Senga said he himself did not know the full details of what caused the trouble except that it was related to Wong's plan to reform the procurement system.

"The Navy chief has a procurement system which he wants (enforced)," Senga said.

Violations

In Baguio City, human rights advocates urged the President not to appoint Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim as the next AFP chief of staff.

They cited his human rights track record as grounds for their objection.

Beverly Longid, a convenor of the Cordillera Human Rights Organization (CHRO), said the families of rights abuse victims, church workers and regional officials were opposed to Calimlim's appointment.

"*Hindi puwede* (It cannot be done). He committed so many human rights violations when he was director" of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (Isafp), Longid said.

She was referring to the alleged illegal arrest of 14 church and nongovernment workers whom the Isafp had accused of plotting the murder of rebel priest Conrado Balweg in 1999.

She said Calimlim was responsible for the "mental and physical torture" of the 14, five of whom were arrested by the military last year but were later ordered released by an Abra court for lack of evidence.

Isafp members were reported to have abducted one of the 14, Lorna Rivera Baba, an Aglipayan Church worker, in Piddigan, Abra, on March 17 last year.

Baba was detained at Camp Aguinaldo and presented by Calimlim at a press conference five days later as the supposed mastermind of the Balweg murder.

Jose Molintas, a lawyer and convenor of the CHRO, had accused Calimlim and the Isafp of fabricating charges and evidence against Baba.

"If Calimlim becomes the AFP chief of staff, then we should expect an increase in human rights violations," Longid said.

She said the families of Baba and the others arrested in connection with the Balweg murder had denounced Calimlim and the Isafp for their supposed record of "abduction, illegal detention and physical violence."

Calimlim has described himself as the "logical successor" to Reyes by virtue of his being AFP vice chief of staff.

Disgrace

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay denounced the reported jockeying among the generals for the top military post.

"The intense jockeying for position by some of the candidates is a disgrace to the uniform they wear as military officers. They are obviously thinking more about their personal ambition instead of the welfare of the AFP and the country as a whole," Pichay, who chairs the House committee on national defense, said in a statement.

Pichay called on the President to take her time in choosing Reyes' replacement and ignore all those urging her to speed up the process.

"I call on all politicians not to pressure the President one way or the other," he said.

He also suggested that Ms Macapagal immediately strike from the short list of candidates those who were banking on their closeness to political groups or were using the media to lobby for the position. ***With a report from Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Ani discloses Loi's ₱110-M withdrawal

(From page A1)

On Feb. 1, the former first lady decided to withdraw P109,827,016 from her first account; P44,145 from her second account; and P327,341 from her third account.

Laarni

Earlier, Desierto admitted that one of Estrada's mistresses, Laarni Enriquez, had a total deposit of P650 million in her savings and current accounts with the Philippine Savings Bank.

Bank records showed that Enriquez deposited the money within a period of one year.

Both accounts were closed on Dec. 1, six days before the start of the Senate impeachment trial of Estrada on corruption charges.

Following the lead of Equitable PCI Bank and six other banks, the United Coconut Planters Bank yesterday also turned over Enriquez's bank records at the UCPB Navotas Branch to Desierto.

The UCPB statements of account showed that Enriquez had deposited a total of P4.1 million into her current account No. 121-0000937-0; P9.1 million into her savings account No. 121-116041-8, and another P6.8 million (initial placement was P1.5 million) into another account.

The savings and current accounts with UCPB were closed on Jan. 29. The remaining account was closed last Dec. 7, the start of Estrada's impeachment trial.

It was not clear whether the money withdrawn by Ejercito and Enriquez came from the P3.2-billion account of Estrada with Equitable PCI Bank under the name of Jose Velarde.

The account was closed last Nov. 13, the day the House of Representatives impeached Estrada.

Explanation

Estrada yesterday tried to explain the hefty bank accounts of Enriquez.

"The truth is she has been working hard in her business (*masipag na yan sa negosyo*) right from the start when I gave her starting capital," he said.

"She has been doing good in business selling jewelry, buying and selling real estate, and she's earning (from that)," Estrada said.

He said he personally encouraged Enriquez to go into business "to have a secure future and to ensure a good education for our children, in case something happens to me."

But he said it was an "exaggeration" to say that Enriquez had kept as much as P650 million in PS Bank.

Asked about her return to the country Sunday night, the former President said Enriquez decided to come back "because she can no longer bear not seeing (our) children."

Estrada has three children with Enriquez, aged 15, 11 and 4.

Estrada to tour country to campaign for his bets

(From page A1)

reprieve from criminal prosecution, Estrada said he would soon resume speaking to provincial crowds "starting in Mindanao."

Asked why he chose Mindanao as his starting point, Mr. Estrada said "it has been my strategy" since he entered national politics.

Mr. Estrada said he was "gladdened" by the SC ruling, saying it would arrest his "conviction by publicity."

He said the Department of Justice and Ombudsman Aniano Desierto "had already convicted me in the press."

"That's why I cannot trust the Ombudsman anymore, because they've already convicted me in the press," he said.

He is expected to campaign most aggressively for his wife, Dr. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, who leads the senatorial ticket of the "Puwersa ng Masa" coalition mainly made up of his former Cabinet men and allied reelectionist senators.

Estrada said he would start appearing at Puwersa's campaign sorties as soon as the coalition named all its candidates for local positions nationwide.

Gagged but hands not tied, says Desierto

(From page A1)

any connection with the pending cases in the Supreme Court, we can work on them," Perez said.

Desierto said the Supreme Court order only pertained to prohibition on "resolving or deciding" the complaints for graft, plunder, malversation, bribery and perjury.

The Supreme Court also ordered "the parties (in the Estrada case) and especially their counsel who are officers of the court . . . to refrain from making any comment or discussing in public the merits of the cases at bar."

President Macapagal-Arroyo said that neither the gag order nor the 30-day reprieve would prevent her administration from filing criminal cases against the deposed President.

"We are required to bring justice to those who violated the trust of the people," she said in a speech to businessmen. "There can be no healing without cleansing. There can be no reconciliation without justice," Ms Macapagal said.

Two groups assailed the court order.

Motion for reconsideration

The Confederation of Lawyers for Estrada's Abrupt Resignation (CLEAR) said the group would file a motion for reconsideration with the Supreme Court.

The militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said the ruling "blatantly favors" Estrada and "frustrates the Filipino people's pleas for justice."

"This is a sad day for democracy. Just a month after People Power II ousted Estrada, the Supreme Court has turned us into victims twice over," said Bayan chair Rafael Mariano, one of the signatories to the forfeiture complaint against Estrada.

Leonard de Vera, spokesperson of CLEAR, said the "gag order" was "unfair" and a disservice to the Filipino people.

"Anybody is free to talk, why should we be discriminated against?" he said.

CLEAR is one of the lawyers' groups which filed criminal cases of plunder against Estrada with the Ombudsman. It is covered by the gag order.

The Supreme Court resolution was in response to the petitions filed by Estrada's lawyer Rene Saguisag.

Saguisag had sought the "gag order" on the grounds that Desierto had already pre-judged the case against Estrada even before he could wrap up the preliminary investigation.

Saguisag argued that Estrada was still the incumbent President because there had been no vacancy in the Office of the President. He said the Ombudsman may not file any case against Estrada who had invoked executive immunity from suit.

No strong case

Renato Corona, presidential spokesperson and chief of staff, said the tribunal's order was part of "due process" and did not mean that the ousted President had a strong case in court.

He said the executive department would still "win its case in the end."

"This is not unusual. It's okay," he said.

He recalled that during the Ramos administration of which he was a part, there were also similar resolutions issued by the Supreme Court.

"We were issued TROs before. Eventually, the government won," he told the INQUIRER.

"If we cannot file criminal cases in 30 days. On the 31st day, a case can still be filed," he said.

Perez said the SC resolution did not put a dent to the growing evidence against Estrada his office had gathered.

"This gives us time to strengthen the case. We will be able to submit additional evidence during the 30-day TRO period," Perez said.

Desierto clarified that the order did not prohibit him from proceeding with the fact-finding investigation on the complaint for forfeiture, which seeks to seize Estrada's assets, estimated at P20 billion.

"Also, the order does not cover the new cases which would be filed against Mr. Estrada with the Ombudsman," he said.

Desierto said his office would still file a manifestation or clarification of the order with the high court to clear these things.

"We want to clarify if the order is strictly on the matter of deciding or resolving the cases," he said.

Desierto said he would have preferred to resolve the complaints within the week to prove that the government, particularly the Ombudsman, was serious in its efforts to "render justice to the Filipino people."

"What the Supreme Court did was within its authority to do so. It was understandable because the court should not be preempted or unduly influenced in its deliberation on the merits of the petitions filed before it," he said.

Desierto was referring to the special civil action for quo warranto filed by Estrada's lawyers questioning the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration, and the petition for prohibition to stop the Ombudsman from proceeding with its investigation.

Without the 30-day status quo order, Desierto would have been expected to initiate criminal proceedings with the Sandiganbayan this Friday against Estrada and his co-respondents.

Desierto said he would not comment on the merits of the cases but would report any evidence either submitted by the complainants or presented by the special panel.

He pointed out that there was a need to report the status of the investigation.

"Our main purpose is to make fully transparent the investigation lest we be accused of covering up," he said.

Despite the tribunal's order, Desierto can still subpoena all bank deposits of Estrada, including deposit substitutes like short-term and long-term commercial papers, according to Rep. Oscar Moreno.

Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo said the 30-day grace period would give the Ombudsman enough time to analyze and file the appropriate charges against Estrada.

"The Ombudsman has enough evidence and leads which were stranded when the impeachment trial was aborted for him to nail down the ousted president," Arroyo said.

Estrada will face new charges in the coming days after House prosecutors yesterday turned over to private prosecutors documents as evidence against the former President.

Former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito will not be spared as one of the cases involved the diversion of government funds into a private foundation of which she is an officer.

Those who attended the rites held at a Quezon City hotel were Speaker Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte Jr., Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada, Western Samar Rep. Antonio Eduardo Nachura and Cebu Rep. Clavel Martinez.

With the turnover, private prosecutors led by University of the East Law School Dean Amado Valdez and Free Legal Assistance Group head Jose Manuel Diokno vowed to pursue the cases.

PCSO anomalies

The documents pertain to the charges contained in Articles 4 and 3-B of the impeachment complaint such as the hot cars issue, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) anomaly and the assigning of relatives and Cabinet officials to multiple posts.

"We want to prosecute the case not because we are after President Estrada as a person but because we want to elevate a certain standard of morality and decency in government," Valdez said.

Diokno, for his part, said that his group had discovered other anomalies and FLAG could pursue them even if they were not alleged in the Articles of Impeachment.

"Aside from the P250 million which Estrada diverted to a foundation, we discovered that millions of pesos were also channeled to other projects of the same foundation of the former first lady, including the Erap Dialysis Center," Diokno said.

He added that the former President even advanced funds to the private foundation and would just get "reimbursements" from the PCSO.

"This is one of the most blatant in the PCSO case, the Botika sa Masa. Instead of going to the poor, the money went to the pockets of the Estradas," Diokno said, apparently referring to the Partnerships for the Poor foundation. *With a report from Andrea Trinidad-Echavez*

Inquirer inaugurates new printing plants in Davao, Cebu

(From page A1)

Macario Rufino of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and Dennis Valdes, FEP president.

Valdes said the two new printing plants are electronically linked to the main press in Manila, making the INQUIRER available to readers in Southern Philippines on the same day.

The opening of two presses is expected to initially boost the circulation of the INQUIRER by 10 to 20 percent, Valdes said. Later, he said, this could go up by as much as 50 to 60 percent.

The INQUIRER now is the broadsheet with the biggest circulation in the country, selling 220,000 to 230,000 copies Monday through Saturday and 250,000 to 260,000 on Sundays. This could further increase with the opening of the two new presses in the South.

The Davao City plant has 12 Solna D25 2:1 printing units, making it the largest newspaper printing press in Mindanao. Each of the 12 Solna 2:1 units which were made in Denmark can print up to 25,000 copies per hour.

A 2:1 printing unit can print more quickly than the conventional 1:1 printing unit. A 1:1 unit can print one color on the front and one color at the back of a section. A 2:1 unit can print two colors on the front and one color on the back of a section.

The units are flexible and can print a 24-page front section with four pages in color and 20 pages in black and white or two Lifestyle sections of eight pages each in full color at the same time. They can be run by four to five pressmen per shift.

The FEP press in Davao is housed in a 2,000-square-meter building on a 4,000-sq.-m. lot. Valdes said this gives FEP "substantial room for expansion" since the building can house 12 more Solna units.

The Davao and Cebu operations will be digitally linked to the operations in Makati, Valdes said. Once the editing of the paper is finished, it can be electronically sent to the FEP printers in Cebu and Davao. Distribution would also improve since circulation would not be dependent on planes and boats and would not be delayed due to flights canceled on account of typhoons or bad weather.

This would make it possible for the newspaper to hit the newsstands in the South on the same day and at same hour as the paper comes out in Manila, said Valdes.

"This way, FEP can print the same INQUIRER in Manila, Cebu and Davao, " he said.

Eventually, Valdes said, the transmission of the pages would be done through satellite technology rather than by direct electronic link. He said that satellite technology would be "more reliable" since direct electronic links can be broken by disruptions caused by such occurrences as strong typhoons.

Also! with the new presses near urban centers in the South, the newspaper would also be immediately available to cities such as Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro and Zamboanga.

"We are looking at tremendous efficiencies throughout the production system. With everything converted to digital files, it is vital to have digital pre-press facilities right beside all our printing locations. After the printing is done, the distribution departments become involved. Circulation departments need to be right next to their customers—the newspaper dealers," said Valdes.

'Inapplicable, inaccurate, impractical, unlawful'

(From page A1)

Malacañang at the height of Edsa People Power II.

Estrada's lawyer, Pacifico Agabin, filed on Tuesday a petition urging the high court to allow Estrada to remain as "President on leave" until his term expired on 2004 and Ms Macapagal as "acting President" during the three-year period.

Justice Secretary Hernando B. Perez as well as several senators, however, scoffed at the petition as "a mere ploy to escape prosecution" on the part of Estrada who is under investigation by the Ombudsman for plunder and other criminal charges.

For his part, Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo described as "out of tune" the historical precedent cited in the petition that the country had two Presidents during World War II—Manuel L. Quezon of the Philippine Commonwealth and Dr. Jose P. Laurel of the Japanese puppet government.

"There were two governments then—the US-backed Commonwealth and the Japanese-sponsored one—in two different places—Washington and Manila—led by two different Presidents—Quezon and Laurel—under two different Constitutions—the 1935 Constitution and the Japanese-sponsored one," Arroyo pointed out.

"Now, we only have one government, one Constitution and one President—Gloria Macapagal Arroyo whom the people have accepted," he said, adding that Estrada was a "pretender."

Satur Ocampo, head of the party-list group Bayan Muna, said Agabin's claim was "a graphical distortion of history aimed at glossing over Edsa People Power II" that ousted Estrada and installed Macapagal as President.

"Crazy," Rey Magno Teves, co-convenor of Konsensiya ng Bayan, said in Davao City. He warned of the return of nationwide protest actions should the high court accept Estrada's proposition and grant him immunity from criminal suit.

"He can have two wives, but the country can't have two Presidents," Misamis Rep. Oscar Moreno said of Estrada's novel argument before the Supreme Court.

The court has set no deadline when it will hand down its ruling on Estrada's petition regarding Ms Macapagal's takeover. Davide and Justice Artemio Panganiban have inhibited themselves from the case.

The tribunal has asked both sides to submit a summary of their cases this week.

Not bothered

Lawyer Renato Corona, Ms Macapagal's spokesperson and chief of staff, said the new administration was hardly bothered by Estrada's petitions or the Supreme Court's clarification.

Corona said the overwhelming support of Filipinos to the Macapagal presidency more than made up for the absence of a Supreme Court resolution declaring the presidency vacant.

Besides, he added, it was Chief Justice Davide himself who administered the oath to Ms Macapagal and the Supreme Court interposed no objection to the move.

"The reality is that the people have withdrawn their mandate from Mr. Estrada and have installed and recognized a new President of the Philippines," Corona said.

"Nobody recognizes him . . . and he's the only one claiming he's still the President. He's history. It's all academic to me. But the Supreme Court has to go through the process," he added.

According to him, what's applicable in this particular case is the Supreme Court's decision regarding the legality of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' declaration of martial law in 1972.

Corona said the high court simply ruled that there was no more legal impediment to the continued imposition of martial law.

Regarding Agabin's novel argument, Corona pointed out that Quezon was the duly elected President of the Commonwealth while Laurel was installed by the Japanese Imperial Army.

Ms Macapagal, however, was "installed by the people, the same people who put Mr. Estrada in power," he said.

Corona said Estrada had no intention of regaining the presidency but just to retain his immunity from prosecution.

"Presidential immunity is the bottom line here," he said.

House reactions

At a news conference, Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada rebutted Agabin's argument, saying there couldn't be two Presidents "because former President Estrada is not functioning at all at this time."

"He (Estrada) does not have the Armed Forces, he does not have a Cabinet, he is not recognized by Congress and foreign governments. So how can they say that there are two presidents? That is just the lawyer's contention, but that is not the reality," Tañada added.

Western Samar Rep. Antonio Eduardo Nachura also pointed out that Quezon in 1943 was head of a government-in-exile.

"There is no parallel situation here because the legitimate government of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is here and she holds (the reins of government) while the other (Estrada) is also here but does not hold any title, power and recognition," Nachura said.

According to him, the correct precedent to cite is the 1986 case of "Lawyers League for a Better Philippines vs President Aquino" who was installed by Edsa People Power I.

In that case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Aquino government was not only the de facto but also the de jure one.

"The Supreme Court also said the main factor was the acceptance of the people and second was the recognition extended by foreign governments to the Aquino government," he said.

Power vacuum

A private prosecutor in Estrada's impeachment trial UE Law Dean Amado Valdez said that the issue could be interpreted in the "traditional way and the development way."

Valdez said the traditional way would involve a literal interpretation of the Constitution—there can only be a vacancy in the presidency if there is removal through impeachment.

According to him, another way of looking at what happened on Jan. 20 is that there was a vacancy of the presidency because "there was no more military, no more Cabinet, no more bureaucracy the Estrada could count on to exercise his powers as President."

Senators

At the Senate, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said the Macapagal presidency was now "irreversible."

"She has a working Cabinet, she has been recognized by the Supreme Court and by foreign governments. You can no longer reverse that," Biazon said.

New Senate Minority Leader Rene Cayetano said there couldn't be two Presidents because the 1987 Constitution did not allow a leave of absence by a sitting President except for medical reasons.

"Estrada therefore could not take a leave of absence because he was not suffering from a medical illness that temporarily incapacitated him from discharging his duties on Jan. 20. Agabin's assertion is therefore misleading and inapplicable to the present political reality," Cayetano said.

Cayetano said a case of a temporary inability to discharge the functions of a President due to an illness almost occurred when then President Fidel Ramos underwent surgery to prevent a stroke.

"I read to the Cabinet the relevant provision of the Constitution with respect to disability. Happily, the operation was successful and the President recovered after a few hours rest," he said. *With reports from Donna S. Cueto, Armand Nocum, Juliet Labog-Javellana, AP and AFP*

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ALL-FILIPINO CUP

Hotdogs repulse Realtors, 77-63

GAMES TOMORROW
(Ynares Center)
5:15 p.m. Shell vs Alaska
7:30 p.m. Tanduay vs Red Bull

By Marc Anthony Reyes

USING a systematic, six-minute blitzkrieg that spanned the first two quarters, Purefoods snapped its two-game losing run by subduing Sta. Lucia Realty, 77-63, in the PBA All-Filipino Cup last night at the Philsports.

The Hotdogs' third win in five games sent them back in winning form, dismissing the idea that their 2-0 start was just a fluke.

But the manner with which Purefoods carried out the assault wasn't much as shocking as the way Sta. Lucia completely folded up and surrendered.

The Realtors, who just posted their first win in their previous game, failed to recover from there and fell to their fourth loss in five games.

"I didn't expect it to be that easy for us," said Purefoods coach Eric Altamirano. "But we came focused on winning which was evident at the start of the game."

Purefoods' attack started some nine minutes into the game, when Alvin Patrimonio, Andy Seigle and Noy Castillo took turns in scoring against the Realtors' disorderly defense.

In a blur, Purefoods broke a 16-all deadlock with a merciless 15-0 assault that ended with the Hotdogs clutching a hefty 31-16 lead with 8:44 left in the second quarter.

It was a blowout from there on as the Realtors could only score six points in that period, drifting along amid the clutter of the

40
Tender
Juicy
FILA

CASTILLO

Hotdogs' lightning raid.

At that stage, SLR coach Norman Black slumped in his seat, stared at the floor and held his nape in frustration.

Sta. Lucia's Marlou Aquino, Jercules Tangkay and Paulo Mendoza combined for a last-ditch comeback but all they can afford was trim the lead to 11 points in the fourth quarter before the Hotdogs eventually settled the score.

Nelson Asaytono made a one-hander and a slam dunk in succession in the final minute to lift Pop Cola to a 75-67 win over Shell Velocity in the second game.

The Panthers improved to 3-2, the same card held by the Turbo Chargers who missed Benjie Paras due to tonsillitis.

Scores:

PUREFOODS 77 – Castillo 18, Seigle 16, Evangelista 14, Patrimonio 13, Fernandez 9, Pumaren 2, Yap 2, Manuel 2, Yee 1, Victoria 0.

STA. LUCIA 63 – Aquino 14, Tangkay 13, Mendoza 10, Espino 7, Orquillas 7, Belano 5, Del Rosario 4, Adriano 3, Francisco.

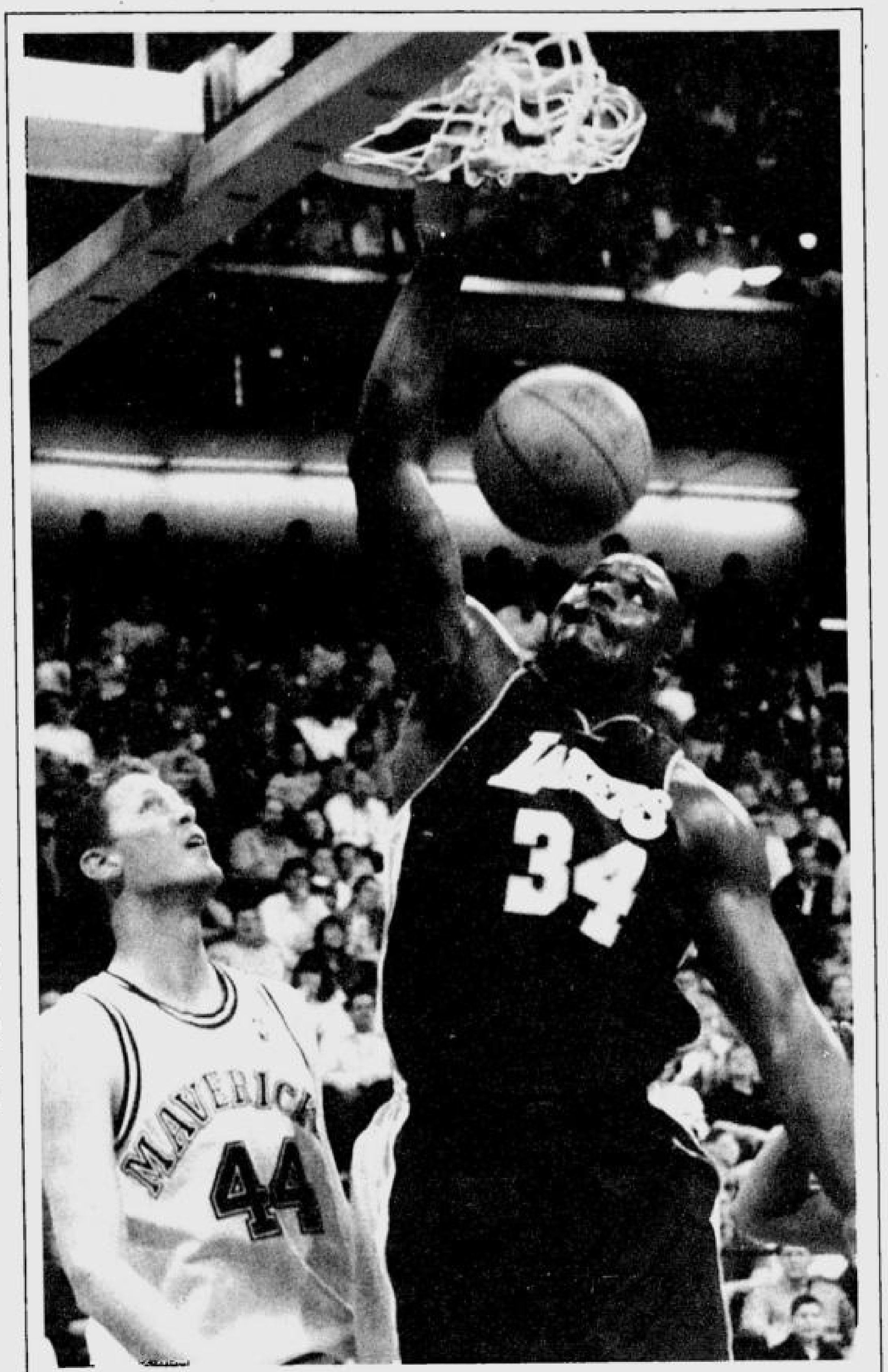
Quarters: 26-16, 38-22, 61-43, 77-63.

PBA keeps ties with Burlington

THE PBA recently renewed ties with Burlington Industries Phils Inc. for the designation of Burlington as the official pro league socks.

The announcement was jointly made by PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino and Burlington general manager Buddy Ruddy Tan.

Burlington socks has been the PBA's choice for almost two decades now. The long-lasting relationship between the two industry leaders began in the 1980s when the hosiery firm joined the list of corporate sponsors of the country's premier pro league.



O'NEAL (34) dunks the ball as Dallas' Shawn Bradley looks helplessly. AP

Raptors rout Warriors; LA spoils Don's return

TORONTO—Vince Carter scored 33 points and Mark Jackson moved passed Isiah Thomas into fourth place on the NBA career assist list as the Toronto Raptors beat the Golden State Warriors, 113-102.

Jackson had 12 assists Tuesday night, raising his career total to 9,065. Jackson, a 14-year veteran, played for New York, the Los Angeles Clippers, Indiana and Denver before signing with Toronto as a free agent in August 2000.

John Stockton is the NBA's career assist leader with 14,255. Magic Johnson is second at 10,141, and Oscar Robertson is third with 9,887.

Antawn Jamison had 31 points for the Warriors, who have lost five straight and 10 of their last 11.

Golden State's Mookie Blaylock had four steals, raising his career total to 2001. Only seven other players have 2000 steals in NBA history.

Knicks 76, Heat 74

In New York, Tim Hardaway threw up an airball and an off-target 3-pointer on Miami's final two possessions, and the Knicks held the Heat to 12 points in the fourth quarter in a typical Heat-Knicks matchup highlighted mainly by defense.

The victory moved the Knicks back into second place in the Atlantic Division, just a few percentage points ahead of Miami.

Latrell Sprewell led the Knicks with 17 points, while Larry Johnson had 14, Marcus Camby 13 and Allan Houston 12.

Anthony Mason had 17 points for the Heat.

Lakers 119, Mavericks 109

In Dallas, Shaquille O'Neal shot 11-for-15 from the line and finished with 29 points and 11 rebounds as Los Angeles spoiled Don Nelson's return from prostate cancer surgery.

Rick Fox tied his season-high with 22 points and Kobe Bryant added 19 points and seven assists for the Lakers, who have won 22 of 23 against Dallas.

Steve Nash led the Mavericks with a career-high 31 points and had seven assists. Dirk Nowitzki scored 25 and Michael Finley added 22.

Nelson was making his comeback from a 52-day, 21-game absence.

Kobe X-rayed on ankle

DALLAS—Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers, the NBA's second-leading scorer, underwent X-rays on his right ankle to determine the severity of an injury sustained in a collision with Shaquille O'Neal. *AP*

Complete results

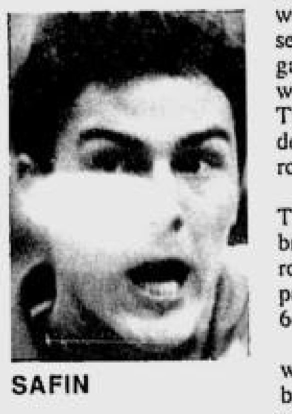
Toronto 113, Golden State 102; Vancouver 116, Washington 104; Phoenix 110, Orlando 104; New York 76, Miami 74; Houston 101, Boston 84; Milwaukee 101, Chicago 92; L.A. Lakers 119, Dallas 109; Portland 104, Denver 94; Sacramento 94, Atlanta 80. *AP*

Safin booted out by unknown rival

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands—Marat Safin tumbled out of the $ 750,000 ABN AMRO tennis tournament on Tuesday, losing his first-round matchup with Max Mirnyi 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-3.

The big-serving Belarussian took advantage of an error-strewn performance from Russian Safin, seeded one at the Ahoy arena and currently topping the ATP rankings.

Earlier second seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia had an easy passage to the second round, beating Czech qualifier Slava Dosedel 6-2, 6-2.



SAFIN

Dosedel had no answer to Kafelnikov's range of shots and produced few winners in a 48-minute rout. The Russian, who won here in 1999, is looking for his second consecutive tournament victory after taking the Marseille Open title last week.

The evening's final clash saw Spanish third seed Alex Corretja win his first match in three visits to Rotterdam, but it took a mighty struggle into the early hours to down Dutch wild card entry Jan Siemerink, 4-6, 7-6 (4), 7-6 (6).

Corretja came back from 4-2 down in the third set and survived three match points.

Last year's winner at Rotterdam, French veteran Cedric Pioline, won the first set against Sweden's Andreas Vinciguerra but struggled to make an impression from the baseline in the rest of the match and eventually lost 4-6, 6-4, 6-4.

In a close third set, the 20-year old Swede, who lost to Tim Henman in last

Meanwhile, second seed Mary Pierce of France began her campaign in the $ 565,000 Dubai Open WTA tennis tournament with a tough 7-6 (4), 6-4 first-round victory over Iroda Tulyaganova of Uzbekistan Tuesday.

The Frenchwoman took some time to settle down against her defiant rival before reeling off some splendid shots.

Taken to a tie break in the first set, which she won 7-4, Pierce did not settle down until the ninth game of the second set when she broke Tulyaganova to take a decisive 5-4 lead on the road to victory.

Fifth-seed Sandrine Testud of France breezed through her first-round match against compatriot Sarah Pitkowski 6-3, 6-2.

Testud, beaten in last week's Doha Open final by Martina Hingis, took an hour and fourteen minutes to wrap up her first encounter in Dubai.

In the other matches on Tuesday, sixth seed Barbara Schett of Austria beat the other wild card entrant in the tournament, Bahia Mouthassine of Morocco 6-4, 6-1.

In Memphis, Tennessee, No. 2 seeded Mark Philippoussis, playing his first match since knee surgery in December, beat Juan Albert Viloca 6-2, 7-5 in the Kroger St. Jude tennis tournament.

There were two upsets Tuesday. Dmitry Tursunov defeated No. 7 Greg Rusedski 7-6 (4), 3-6, 6-3, and will face George Bastl, who beat 10th-seeded Wayne Arthurs 7-6 (4), 7-6 (2).

St. Francis, JRU cagers score anew

SAN Pablo City, Laguna—Defending Champion St. Francis of Assissi College and Jose Rizal University fashioned out contrasting victories over separate rivals to stay ahead in the 55th Rexona-National Inter Collegiate Basketball Championship at the Trade School gym here Tuesday.

St. Francis showed too much class in beating National Capital Region top qualifier National University, 84-69, to clinch one of two crossover semis berths in Group A.

The win-its second in as many matches-enabled the Doves to remain as one of the only two unbeaten teams in this annual tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines under Tiny Literal.

A win over University of Baguio in its third and final assignment will formalize the Dove's entry to the four-team, crossover semis.

Ervin Sotto, the Dove's 6-foot-7 "Tower of Power", scattered 16 pints, while Rudy Espino added 14 points. Al Vergara contributed 12 points and Roy Billanes had 10 points.

Archie Cayabyab, Froilan Baguion and Conrad Santico finished with 10 points apiece for NU, which dropped to 1-1 in a tie with NCAA champion College of St. Benilde.

In Group B, Jose Rizal edged Cebu Doctors College, 78-75, to complete a sweep of its three-game elimination assignment.

Ernani Epondulan poured 25 points and two other mainstays also scored in double figures for the Mandaluyong-based Heavy Bombers.

In the other Group B encounter, ACSAT-Cagayan demolished University of Northern Philippines-Ilocos, 88-64, for its first win in three outings. *AP*

Riddick jailed for wife assault

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Former heavyweight boxing champion Riddick Bowe was being held in jail as a federal prisoner for violation his probation by assaulting his wife, a report said.

Bowe, 33, violated his probation after he pleaded guilty last year to abducting his wife in February 1998, and was jailed Tuesday night in the Mecklenburg County prison, radio station WCNC reported.

Earlier this month, Bowe was charged with assaulting the woman in their home in Syosset, New York.

The Mecklenburg County sheriff's department, which operates the jail, could not be reached for comment early Wednesday. Bowe was listed as a jail inmate on the department's Web site.

Bowe surrendered to federal marshals at Tuesday afternoon and was being held until a bond hearing, which could come as early as Wednesday morning.

Peace chess on Feb. 24

THE FIFTH leg of the 2001 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express, also known as PEACE 2001, fires off on Feb. 24 at Land Bank's multi-purpose hall in Makati City.

Dentist Jenny Mayor holds a precarious one point lead over defending champion Jose Aspiras in the current grand prix standings in the Harmony section, while Cyrus Atienza is on top in the Serenity section.

The year-long, 11-leg event is being sponsored by DNS Company and organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia (Acca) in cooperation with Belgosa Media Systems, Land Bank, Topmost Engineering, Travel Café and Omni Business Center.

Business executives and professionals who wish to join PEACE 2001 may contact the Active Chess Center of Asia (Acca), with tel. 892-8759 for other details.

Mandaluyong derby tonight

ANOTHER major confrontation of upcoming derbyists and bigtime cockers unfolds today at Mandaluyong Coliseum as the "BL BG Showdown 6-Cock Derby" championship round starts at 6 p.m. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds at Lakpue Drug Inc.

Twelve cockers from a batch of 41 posted two victories each in last Tuesday's elimination led by *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio (Bob and Patrick,) who fielded the fast-shuffling Roundheads of Bob Cuenca, and engineer Jun Sevilla (JRS Spectrum,) who used the imported Hulsey Whitehackle from Kent Short of Tennessee, USA.

Equally outstanding were Ucap president Butch Macasaet and Joey delos Santos (Mandaluyong Col. Feb. 27-Mar. 1), Raymond Velayo (Arnis Master), NCA stalwarts Rudy Albano (Mulawin Sa Araneta March 19 and 21), Romy Panganiban (Argem Coliseum), Alan Tan (AT James), Jessie Viceo (San Rafael) and Roel Ricafort (AT 114) along with Louie Cua (LCC Momentum), Carding Ng/Ben Chan (CMS BC Jopet) and Jess Capos (Albay April 5 and 7).

Meanwhile, submission of weights to the second "Sabado Night 4-Cock Derby," slated Feb. 24, is tomorrow, from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Derby host is Rick Sarmiento of Mandaluyong.

The "5th Ucap/BJ Greenwood 6-Cock Derby" promoted by Macasaet and delos Santos is slated on Feb. 27 and March 1.

BILLIARDS CHAMP

Shooters Billiard chairman Ely G. Bayanin (right) and director Atty. Lito Crucillo award the trophy, cash prize and a brand new Cuetec to Ana Cheng, who topped the Shooters Billiard All-Ladies 9-Ball tournament held recently at the Shooters Billiard Hall in Teoville, Paranaque City.

ROLIGON EVENT

Cuneta, Te brothers entries head 'Karambola' finalists

CHET Cuneta's Skywalker entry and Wilson and Manny Te's Wilman, both fielding roosters from Texas' top game fowl breeder James Pope, stole the show during last Tuesday's Day 2 of the record-breaking "Super Karambola 4-Cock Derby" at the Roligon Mega Cockpit after easily winning over their highly-rated opponents.

The last day of eliminations takes place tonight with 70 new entries vying to qualify in the championship on Saturday.

Equaling Cuneta's and the Te brothers' performance were Emmit San Juan—Dangerous, Arnold Mendoza & William Tan—Bulak, Cris Manansala and Princess Naldo—CM Thunderbolt, Cong. Salalima—San Juan, Eugene Padilla—Icon I, Jojie Carandang—Spymaster III, Atty. Art de Castro—Buck Rogers and Bukal, Pol Garde—Gar Farm and Leo Banua—Wake-up.

Locking horns tonight are Cong. Rudy Albano & engineer Pacifico Berin (Vertical Limit), former Commissioner Romy de Guzman, Gener Alcoreza, Dicky Lim, Lawrence Wacnang, Jessie Cabalza, Gerard Young, Peter Cahurao, Boy Vasquez, Col. Macky Senoza, Jun Manguerra, Cesar Hernandez, Edmund Y. Ruaro, Jimmyton Araneta and Benjie Ledesma among others.

Hosted by Rolando Luzong of Marikina City, the 4-day spectacle stakes a P1 million guaranteed cash prize and a trophy donated by Ninja Feeds.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Lucky Swing/D Optician 2. Diana 3. Lady Victoria 4. Justsaywhenjen 5. Feast of Diamond

Race 2—1. Flirting Hero 2. Gold Pyramid

Race 3—1. Memorandum 2. Danielle's Angel 3. Man of the Hour 4. Star of Alabang

Race 4—1. Reign of Glory 2. Princely Native 3. Houdini 4. Smart Kevin 5. He's Splendid

Race 5—1. Spectacular Lady 2. Mrs. Big 3. Dressed to Impress

Race 6—1. Mikey's Cure 2. Super Strong 3. Time Essential 4. Storm Rising 5. Fortune Maker

Race 7—1. Let Me Pass 2. Running Indy 3. Dinner Dress 4. Majestic Ruler

Race 8—1. Black Force 2. Dixie Melody 3. Rainmaker 4. Radio Airwaves 5. Strong Wind

Silver Story is Horse of the Year

TRIPLE Crown hopeful Silver Story ran away with the Horse of the Year award during the 3rd Gintong Lahi Awards Tuesday. Silver Story, last year's outstanding juvenile colt, is owned by businessman Patrick Uy. The Philippine Sportswriters Association also accorded Silver Story the same award recently.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Lydia forgives driver

"HEALING and rebuilding," one of the pillars in President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's government, has found an ally in former sprint queen Lydia de Vega-Mercado. De Vega-Mercado, once considered as the fastest woman in Asia, showed this remarkable trait anew when she said yesterday she and husband Paulo will not pursue the criminal case against the jeepney-driver who ran over and killed their son, John Michael, last week.

BACK TO WACK WACK

₱8-M Casino Filipino RP Open set

BY AL S. MENDOZA
Sports Editor

GOPEZ

THE PHILIPPINE Open will have history as its main backdrop this year.

The Casino Filipino Philippine Open Golf championship, set from March 29 to April 1 at Wack Wack, will not only be envisioned to surpass existing prize records.

It will also recall fond memories of the fabled event that began 88 years ago in 1913 at a Malabon layout called then as the Manila Golf Club.

The P8-million pot tossed in by the Philippine Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) could yet be hiked to sky-high proportions as organizers plan to make the Open's dramatic comeback at Wack Wack as memorable an affair as the previous ones.

The Open was launched yesterday at a press conference at Wack Wack, the Open's home for many years.

"We are now ready to unleash what could probably be the richest Philippine Open in history," said Rod Feliciano, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines who will jointly chair the Executive Committee with MMDA chair and Wack Wack president Ben Abalos. "This Open will be remembered as the biggest yet."

"Now that the Open is back at Wack Wack," said Abalos, "I think history is again in the making at the club that is perennially known as the home of the Open. I will personally devote my time to ensure that the Open will again recapture its magic of old."

Abalos himself has become a Wack Wack icon. His story is one for the books: from a caddy that he was about four decades ago, he is now Wack Wack's president.

"I will return everything that Wack Wack has given me," said Abalos.

For 29 years in its last 43 stagings, Wack Wack was the host of the fabled Open.

With Ephraim Genuino, president and chair of Pagcor, unselfishly throwing his support behind the country's annual premiere sporting event, the Open is expected to draw the region's top parbusters.

"This year's Open will be unique in that it is inviting the top two amateurs of some of our neighboring countries to participate," said Benigno M. Gopez, chair of the organizing committee. "Aside from the two top amateurs, the top two professionals of other countries in the region will also be invited."

The starting field is pegged at 150, with 20 amateurs seeded in the tournament that has Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita, NGAP chair, as honorary chair.

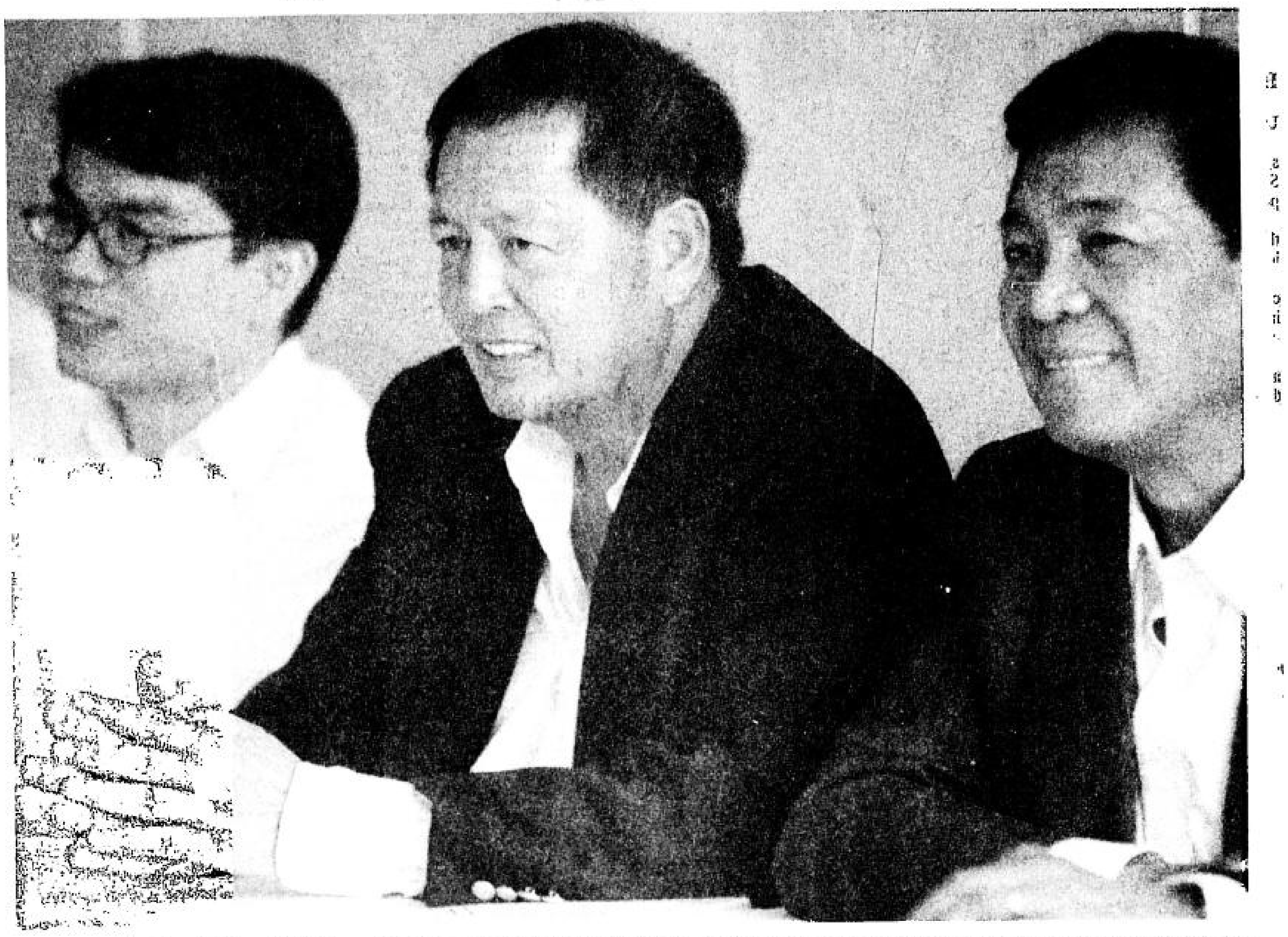
For his part, Abalos said that Wack Wack "will, as usual, play its role to the hilt as the club holds a rich tradition of hosting with smashing success the Open starting in 1957."

Frankie Miñoza, still the country's No. 1 golfer, is raring to win his second Open crown after scoring his breakthrough win in 1998 at Riviera.

Riviera was also the host of the 2000 Open won by Gerald Rosales.

It was the legendary Celestino Tugot who won the Open in 1957 at Wack Wack. Wack Wack hosted it again from 1958 to 1967. After Holiday Hills hosted it in 1968, the Open was back at Wack Wack in 1969. It stayed at Wack Wack up to 1982.

The last time Wack Wack hosted it in 1999, Robert Pactolerin was the winner.



ABALOS (third from left) and Feliciano (middle) answer questions during yesterday's press conference. Also shown is Pagcor's Teodorico Delfin.

ERNIE SARMIENTO

FU beach bets gain q'finals

BY JUNE NAVARRO

TITLE-FAVORITE Foundation University of Dumaguete City barged into the quarterfinals of the 5th Nestea Beach Volley University Challenge after walloping University of Santo Tomas, 12-4, yesterday at the rain-drenched CCP grounds.

With veteran spikers Edward Balbuena and Isidro Bongcasan still around, Foundation University toppled every obstacle on the way, feeling the pinch only against their schoolmates Ralph Mingueto and Kent Bulabon, who represented FU's second team.

Mingueto smelled an upset but failed to complete it when his smash hit nothing but net, automatically serving the victory to Balbuena and Bongcasan on a silver platter, 12-11.

"He (Mingueto) could have finished us off. Good thing, breaks went our way," said a delighted Balbuena, who with Bongcasan earned a trip last year in Boracay and finished third behind Mapua and eventual champion Letran.

Southwestern University-Cebu and San Sebastian College took contrasting routes but ended up as quarterfinalists in the women's division.

Marie Kenneth Cinco and Jannet Ponte of SWU-Cebu breezed past University of St. La Salle, 12-2, to clinch a trip to the quarters.

Patricia Siatan and Sarah Fay Luna of SSC, however, encountered agonizing moments in beating De La Salle University, 12-10, before delivering USLS-Bacolod's second blackeye, 12-0, to snare the second quarterfinals slot.

Eight pairs in the men's and women's division will fight it out in the quarterfinals on Sunday where the winners will proceed to dispute the "Kings and Queens of the Beach" titles in Boracay on April 21-22.

Later in the afternoon, Foundation's Mingueto and Bulabon vented their ire on defending champion Letran, 12-2, before toppling UST, 12-6, to join their schoolmates in the quarterfinals.

Stringers Brian Esquibel and Jessie Fajardo failed to preserve Letran's crown, won last year by Gino Macallan and Marvin Gotangogan.

PAL Seniors tilt on today

Luisita, Wack Wack golfers favored in Cebu

CEBU CITY—The Philippine Airlines' Seniors tournament, the annual gathering of the country's golfing elders, comes off the wraps today with Luisita and Wack Wack picked to battle it out for top team honors.

"As usual, we will have an interesting competition and we look forward to winning one more time," said Luisita Golf and Country Club skipper Rudy Samson.

"As defending champion, Luisita is the top favorite but we will give the Tarlac bets our best shot," said Wack Wack Golf and Country Club team captain Jun Jacinto.

"Wack Wack president Ben Abalos is actually the Wack Wack team captain. "But he could not make it so I am subbing for him," Jacinto said.

Other players carrying the Wack Wack colors are Alex Sison, Boy Figueroa, Taira Tanaboko, Louie Borromeo, Jose "Tetu" Santos, Andy Co and Danny Tamayo.

Actually, the sweet swingers from Hacienda Luisita will be seeking their ninth Championship Division title since taking their first crown in 1988. They dethroned Wack Wack in 1999 at the Cagayan de Oro City's Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club and Del Monte.

The 36-hole event is spread over three rounds at the Cebu Country Club and Club Filipino de Cebu to give way to a record field of 55 teams from around the country and overseas.

It officially started yesterday with the traditional hitting of ceremonial balls. Those who did the honors were PAL senior assistant vice president for Mindanao sales Domingo T. Duerme, Club Filipino de Cebu executive Ed Misa, Cebu Country Club vice president Bogs Unchuan and PAL vice president for marketing Felix Cruz.

This year's competition has Airbus Industrie, GE Aircraft Engines, Mareco Broadcasting Corporation (105.1 Crossover), Nation Broadcasting Corp., TTG Asia and ABS-CBN International for major sponsors.

Corporate backers include Asia Brewery, Pathfinder Holdings Philippines, Boeing, Bombo Radyo, dwWW, Foreign Post, Fortune Tobacco, Malay, Philippine Star, Premier Wines and Spirits, Radio Mindanao Network; University of Mindanao Broadcasting Network, Waterfront Hotel, Zebra Holdings, PLDT, Century Park Hotel, El Nido Beach resort, Heritage Hotel, U-Bix Corp., Verdemar Golf and Country Club and RGMA Network Inc.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets vs Duke Blue Devils at 8 a.m., Georgetown Hoyas vs St. John's Red Storm at 10 a.m. and Arkansas Razorback vs South Carolina Gamecocks at 4 p.m. on ESPN

NBA Action at 5 p.m. on IBC 13

NBA – Phoenix Suns vs Miami Heat at 5:30 p.m. on IBC 13

GOLF: Golfglobe 2001 at 7 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

PGA Buick Invitational, Final Day at 8 a.m. (r), Tour Highlights at 6 p.m. (r – 12:30 a.m.) on Star Sports

LPGA Cup 'O Noodles Hawaiian Ladies Open, First Round at 12 noon on ESPN

HOCKEY: NHL - Florida Panthers vs Pittsburgh Penguins tomorrow at 2 a.m. on ESPN

TENNIS: Senior Nations Cup at 3 p.m. on Star Sports

Watson's Water Challenge at 9:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

CYCLING: Tour of Langkawi 2001, Day #1 Highlights at 7:30 a.m. on Star Sports

WRESTLING: WWF Raw at 1 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

SOCCER: Football Focus at 7:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

UEFA Champions League at 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

Futbol Mundial at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

TABLE TENNIS: ITTF English Open, Semifinals #2 at 10 a.m. (r), Finals at 10:30 p.m. on Star Sports

ICE SKATING: NHK Trophy 2000 at 7 p.m. on Star Sports

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Pacquiao faces North Korean Saturday

FILIPINO southpaw Manny Pacquiao has never been beaten by Korean fighters.

His previous victims include the likes of Sung Yu Lee, Woo Ki Lee and Seung Kwon Chae.

But on Saturday, Feb. 24, the former world champion will be facing–though another Korean, but this time from the north–Tetsutora Senrima.

Senrima, whose real name is Chulho Kang, arrived yesterday and promised to take away Pacquiao's crown when they meet at the Yñares Sports Center for the WBC International Superbantamweight Division.

The event will be presented by San Miguel Beer and backed by Gov. Casimiro Yñares Jr., Royal Palm Hotel, and Casino Filipino.

The 31-year-old Senrima said that he had prepared hard for this match, believing that a win would definitely catapult him into the world ranking.

"I am ready. If he has never been beaten by fighters from South Korea, somebody from the North is going to put him down," Senrima said through his interpreter.

The 12-round encounter dubbed "Rumble in Antipolo" is being promoted by Gabriel "Bebot" Elorde Jr. and will also have two other WBC international fights as supporting mainer.

Flyweight titlist Randy Mangubat takes on bell-to-bell banger Bert Cano, while Zarlit Rodrigo defends his minimum weight crown against tough Ernesto Rubillar.

FIRST Husband Mike Arroyo (middle) raises the arms of Pacquiao and Senrima during the boxers' courtesy call yesterday. Also shown (from left) are Bebot Elorde, Senrima's handler and Philip Juico.

RP sending 350-strong contingent to SEA Games

BY JUNE NAVARRO

NO more than 350 athletes and officials will comprise the Philippine contingent seeing action in the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur this September.

SEAG chief of mission Freddie Jalasco bared this estimate after the joint Philippine Sports Commission-Philippine Olympic Committee Task Force met yesterday to deliberate on the total number of athletes which could realistically give the country a fourth-place finish in the biennial meet.

"Definitely, the number won't exceed the expected number of entries but would possibly be trimmed down depending on the athletes' performance before the POC submits the final list of entries on July 31," said Jalasco.

Accompanying the athletes are 106 officials, including coaches and the medical team.

With a computation of P75,000 per head during actual competition in the week-long meet, Jalasco said the whole RP contingent will need roughly P26 million, training and equipment notwithstanding.

He said the joint PSC-POC Task Force also agreed to include lawn balls into the delegation, making it 29 out of 34 disciplines the country would compete in.

Combat sports such as taekwondo, karatedo, boxing and wushu are expected to reap majority of the medals at stake in order for the country to realize its aim of fourth place, Jalasco added.

"Placing-wise, we are still eyeing fourth place because in reality Indonesia and Thailand are the countries to beat. Malaysia as host country will give us a lot of headaches," said Jalasco.

The joint PSC-POC Task Force will meet again on Monday to finalize everything with respect to the budget and the names entered into the national training pool.

BOOST FOR ATHLETES—Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso L. Dayrit (right) turns over to PCSM (Philippine Center Sports Medicine) director Dr. Jose Raul Canlas Polar heart rate monitors as part of the POC-Olympic Solidarity donations to PCSM for use by Filipino athletes preparing for local and international competitions like the 21st Southeast Asian Games in Malaysia. Also in picture, from left, are RP delegation chef de mission Freddie Jalasco, POC first vice president Steve Hontiveros, wrestling president Gen. Manuel Ribo (ret.), tennis president Salvador Andrada and Fitness Shop's Restie Allen Aquino. The donations include two treadmills and three stationary bikes.

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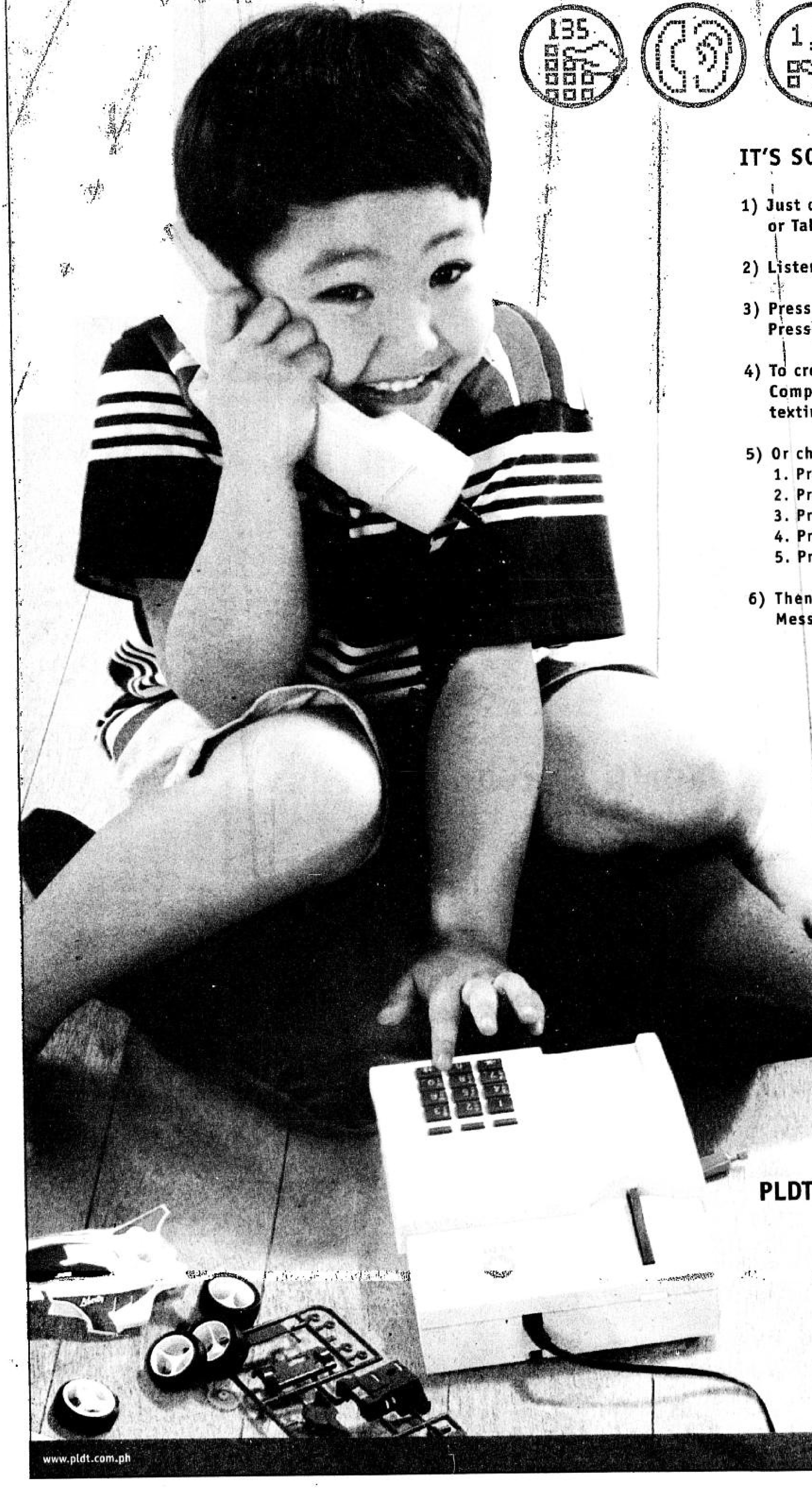

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■ Robber stabs pensioner 26 times A26

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

■ Metro police need more mobility and personnel, says new chief Peña A26

Pasay officials want MRT dismantled

BY ALCUIN PAPA

PASAY City officials yesterday filed a civil case to dismantle the Metro Rail Transit line on Edsa, from the Magallanes interchange to Taft Avenue, for being a "public nuisance."

Vice Mayor Greg Alcera and Councilors Romulo Cabrera, Arvin Tolentino, Allan Panaligan, Connie Dy, Rey Padua, Ed Advincula, and Pete Tianzon filed the case before the Pasay City regional trial court.

Named as respondents in the case are the president of the Metro Rail Transit Corp., the secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Communications.

City officials accused MRT officials of misinforming Pasay residents and misrepresenting the construction of the transit line, which turned out to be different from the original building plans.

"The ground level construction of the MRT is incorrect and (has become) a public nuisance under the law," Cabrera said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

PASAY/ A26

Common billboards for Manila bets

BY JEROME ANING

TO solve the indiscriminate display of election campaign posters in areas not designated by the Commission on Elections, the Manila city government yesterday said it would put up blank billboards all over the city to serve as common poster areas.

Mayor Lito Atienza said the move aims to minimize the illegal pasting of campaign posters on public and private walls, a practice prohibited by the election laws and city ordinances on vandalism.

The billboards will measure 12 feet by 24 feet and will be placed in strategic areas such as road junctions and playgrounds, according to the mayor.

"We understand the candidate's need to convey their messages to the voters but this has to be done in an orderly manner," he explained. "We will try our best to accommodate everyone but they also have to cooperate."

He said City Hall has spent and continues to spend public funds to beautify the city and maintain its cleanliness. He said his office would never allow such expenditures and the efforts of government-hired cleaners to go to waste.

Last week, Manila police arrested about 30 people whom they caught pasting campaign posters on the walls of government buildings and the posts of the Light Rail Transit in Ermita, Manila.

Atienza said residents should not vote for candidates who continue to vandalize public areas in the city through the illegal posting of campaign materials.

"They could lose a substantial number of votes in Manila if they persist with this irresponsible and unacceptable practice," he said. "Manila residents are not happy about what is being done to their city."

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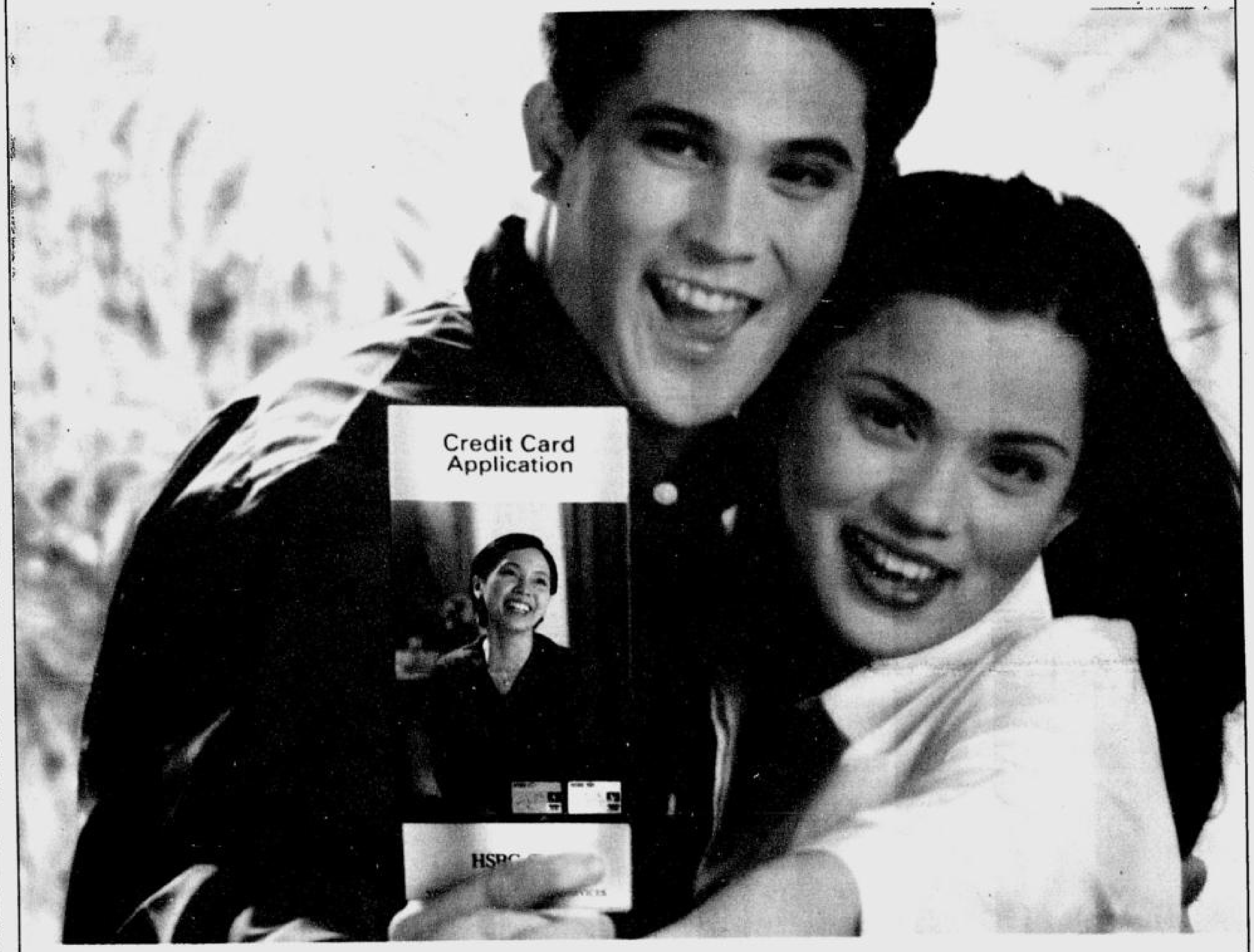

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A dangerous precedent in the military

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PEOPLE Power II at Edsa, which ousted a supposedly inept and allegedly corrupt president, has created an ugly byproduct in the military.

Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong, Navy flag officer in command, has been forced to retire early by his men at the Philippine Marine Corps. Wong is retiring on March 1, nine months earlier than his scheduled retirement in December, this year. Wong graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1969.

Some members of the Corps, the most disciplined unit in the Armed Forces, allegedly threatened to storm the Navy headquarters on Roxas Boulevard, physically carry the Navy chief out of his office, and dump him onto the sea at the back of the headquarters.

Wong was said to have made insulting remarks against the Marine Corps.

***

Had that physical ouster of the Navy chief taken place, it would have made the Philippine military a laughingstock of the other military organizations in the world.

Our Marine Corps is a complete copycat of the United States Marine Corps—from its uniform to its motto, "first to fight" to its advertising slogan "the few, the proud, the Marines."

The US Marines pride themselves as the most disciplined armed organization not only in the US but also in the whole world. The big American brother would have become red in the face because his little brown brother, although mimicking all his action, is short on discipline.

***

Had Wong's humiliating ouster taken place, it would have been a reprise of People Power II at Edsa.

The Marines wanted their leader booted out without due process. Estrada was ousted out of office by a popular uprising. But a lot of constitutionalists claim he was removed from office illegally and unconstitutionally.

***

The early retirement of the Navy chief has set a dangerous precedent in the military. In the future, a leader in the Army, Air Force or Navy might be kicked out of office just because he happens to be unpopular with his subordinates.

Which is the case with Admiral Wong. He became unpopular among the military's "fightingest" men because of his acidic tongue. Wong has accused top Marine brass—past and present—of being thieves.

He said the reason many enlisted Marine men die in combat is because the money, which should have been spent for modern armament and equipment, instead went to the pockets of their leaders.

***

Of course, even if the accusation were true, Wong didn't have to make the insulting remark in front of the enlisted men. He was wrong there.

But it was also wrong for the Marine officers to react to Wong's insult the way they did.

The officers could have lodged a complaint with the Armed Forces top brass. That was expected of a military man: to file his complaint "go through channels."

***

After Marine officers in the field read about Wong's allegedly insulting remarks in this column, they sent messages to their commandant asking if they could rush to Manila with their men in tow.

Some of the messages read: "Call us anytime, we'll go there." "Tell us when to move in." "We're ready, please advise." "We are deeply hurt." "We are waiting for your guidance."

But one Marine middle-ranking officer put it bluntly to this writer: "We will go to HPN (Headquarters, Philippine Navy), rush to the office of the FOIC (flag officer in command), bodily carry him out of headquarters, and dump him onto the sea."

The Marines would have staged a rebellion against the Navy chief.

***

Wong was told about the plan by some Marines to attack the Navy headquarters and humiliate him. So, he did the face-saving gesture and offered to go on an early retirement.

The Marines are happy that their pride has been restored. But the incident is very, very frightening not only for the whole military establishment, but also for the whole country. President Macapagal should lose some sleep over the incident.

***

Our military has become highly politicized, thanks to People Power I and II.

The two military-backed civilian uprisings have set precedents that might become the basis for ousting unpopular leaders.

Let's pray that this country will not become a banana republic.

***

The couple whom SPO4 Cesar Teneros reportedly beat up recently is in serious condition.

Rudy and Leni Evardone couldn't go to work for a couple of days because of the beating they suffered. Rudy is in hospital with broken nose and ribs, and Leni is recuperating at home.

The couple's only fault was that they tried to help a road accident victim. Rudy and Leni allegedly saw the girlfriend of Teneros taking the jewelry of the unconscious victim.

When they confronted the woman, she reportedly shouted to Teneros: "Daddy, *magpaputok ka na at nakikialam itong mag-asawa* (Fire your gun because the couple is being nosy)."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, February 22, 2001
Chair of St. Peter

1st Reading: *1 P 5:1-4*
Gospel: *Mt 16:13-19*

Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples, "What do people say of the Son of Man? Who do they say I am?" They said, "For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "It is well for you, Simon Barjona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

And now I say to you: You are Peter (or *Rock*) and on this rock I will build my Church; and never will the powers of death overcome it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in heaven."

Commentary:

In the presence of my father, none of us in the family dared to sit in his chair, which is at the head of our dining table. It was a symbol of his authority as head of the household. Long after he had died, the chair has remained. And it is enough to look at it to remember him, and to sit on it to be reminded what authority is about: not lording it over others, but assuming a responsibility with firmness and disciplining with love. The feast of the "Chair of Peter" is a good occasion to remind all authority figures in Church, government, communities, and families, what authority is really about. The power is for service, for binding loose ends and loosing tangles, and for finding an earthly access into heaven.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CRIMINAL PROCEDURE)—Newly discovered evidence—The question now is whether the accused-appellant's confession constitutes newly discovered evidence warranting a new trial in favor of accused-appellant. For newly discovered evidence to be a ground for new trial, the following requisites must concur: (a) the evidence is discovered after trial; (b) such evidence could not have been discovered and produced at the trial even with the exercise of reasonable diligence; and (c) the evidence is material, not merely cumulative, corroborative, or impeaching, and of such weight that, if admitted, could probably change the judgment. There is a need for a new trial in order to determine the veracity of the witness' positive identification vis-à-vis the alleged confession made by another convict since no less than a life is at stake. The Court recognizes that "[c]ourt litigations are primarily for the search of truth, and a liberal interpretation of the rules by which both parties are given the fullest opportunity to adduce proofs is the best way to ferret out such truth." Hence, a liberal interpretation of the rule granting a motion for new trial is called for. The Court cannot in good conscience convict accused-appellant and impose upon him the death penalty when evidence, which would possibly exonerate him may be presented by him in a new trial. Neither can the Court acquit him on the sole ground that another person confessed to having committed the crime. [Citations omitted.] [*En Banc*, Justice Mendoza, People v. Ebias, G.R.No. 127130, October 12, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

April Bingo singing no love songs for Mayor Malonzo

By Christian V. Esguerra

CALOOCAN CITY council candidate April "Bingo" Regino yesterday said he is willing to do the dirty job that incumbent Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo apparently could not.

Regino, who is running for District I councilor under the ticket of Malonzo's bitter rival Luis "Baby" Asistio, said the city's worsening garbage crisis is hopeless for as long as Malonzo is in office.

The usually soft-spoken and mild-mannered Regino said Malonzo began acting only on the city's garbage problem recently to boost his chances of winning for a third straight term as mayor.

"The problem with Malonzo is that he has no political will. *Puro bibig lang* (It's all lip service). He's just politicking," Regino told the INQUIRER.

But Malonzo is among the more active Metro Manila mayors who actively coordinate with the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to solve the mounting garbage problem in the metropolis.

MALONZO

Regino is a brother of the more popular April "Boy" Regino. They and another brother, Jimmy, used to be a trio called April Boys, which revived the popularity of jukebox music in the country.

If elected, the singer vowed he would clean up Caloocan within a month and promised he would step down from office if he broke this promise.

But Malonzo said Regino is only showing his ignorance of the Local Government Code and of politics in general by making such promises.

"He is not mayor so how can he clean up Caloocan, more so within a month. I'm the mayor yet I'm having a hard time solving the problem," Malonzo pointed out.

Regino, however, maintained the city's garbage problem would be solved if only corruption would be eradicated. He accused Malonzo of merely concentrating on reaping profit from several branches of a hamburger chain the mayor is said to own in the city instead of cleaning up the city.

But Malonzo said that Regino should just teach barangay captains to collect garbage in their areas as prescribed by law instead of making allegations against him.

"Actually, I don't want to give credence to his statements. He'll lose anyway. *Maglalaho rin siya* (He'll vanish)," Malonzo said.

The mayor also advised Regino and other candidates under Asistio's ticket to take up lessons in governance.

Metro police need more mobility and personnel, says new chief Peña

By Agnes E. Donato

NEWLY-APPOINTED Metro Manila police chief Romeo Peña yesterday blamed the lack of mobility and personnel for the failure of police to fight crime in the metropolis.

Peña made this statement after he, accompanied by Eastern Police District director Simeon Dizon Jr., yesterday morning paid a courtesy call on Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos to ask him to support the local police.

Peña had also met with San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada as well as the chief executives of Pasig City, Caloocan City, Valenzuela City and the towns of Taguig, Pateros, Malabon and Navotas.

Peña said that through these consultations, he established that the lack of personnel and mobile patrol units continue to be the primary problems of the police force.

"The common denominators are mobility and personnel," he said. "But I think I can solve that at my own level."

Peña replaced Director Edgar Aglipay, who was promoted to the PNP Deputy Directorate for Operations.

During his visit to Abalos, the new director of the National Capital Region Police Office said he hoped to establish a good working relationship with local chief executives.

Peña admitted that the police needed the financial backing of the local mayors to become effective in the fight against crime.

He expressed interest in getting the cooperation of local mayors in setting up beat and detective patrols, which he considers effective in fighting cases of robbery and kidnapping, among other crimes.

Under the beat patrol system, policemen would be deployed to identified crime-prone areas.

"We will be banking on our own programs to offset the lack of mobility and personnel," he said. "As of now, we are studying our options on how these problems should be addressed."

Dizon said Peña's plan should be implemented at once and the "fine-tuning could be done later."

"We should put the programs in place before it is too late," Dizon said.

MJ TAKES THE STUMP

Mark Jimenez, former adviser and friend of ousted President Estrada, distributes relief goods to victims of a recent fire in San Andres, Manila. The businessman, whom the United States wants extradited to face several cases, is said to be planning to run in the May elections to represent Manila's 6th district in Congress.

Mel Lopez endorsed by Guingona, FVR

IT WILL be a Lakas NUCD-UMDP-led ticket in Manila with the expected selection by the People's Power Coalition national screening committee of former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez and incumbent Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna as official candidates.

Lopez was endorsed as coalition candidate by former President Fidel Ramos, Vice President Tito Guingona and Sen. Rene Cayetano, chair of the administration party for the national capital region. The announcement is expected to be made this weekend, according to Lopez's camp.

Lopez is expected to publicly present the entire coalition ticket for Manila early next week and in time for the Feb. 28 deadline for filing certificates of candidacy for local elective posts.

Lopez, who served as mayor from 1986 to 1992, is also expected to present a 21-point agenda to put back Manila as the country's capital city and center of trade and commerce.

He said the coalition ticket will prioritize the improvement of health services, the upgrading and modernization of facilities of three city-operated hospitals and the construction of a high-technology-oriented specialty hospital.

He vowed to upgrade the Ospital ng Maynila, Sampaloc General Hospital and Tondo General Hospital.

Lopez said a group of US-based doctors, led by Dr. Rolando Solis, would help him plan the establishment of the city heart centrum. Solis is the cardiologist of both Lopez and the late Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

Pasay officials . . .

(From page A25)

The MRT was allowed to construct its tracks either above or below street-level, as in Quezon City, Mandaluyong and Makati. But according to Cabrera, this did not happen in Pasay, where the transit line straddles five lanes of Edsa.

Cabrera said the MRT should have built the railway at an elevated level, according to building plans presented by the construction firm. But the MRT went ahead and constructed the transit line at street level to save on costs and without the approval of the Pasay City Council.

For that, the MRT violated Executive Order 292, which stipulates that all projects must be approved by the city council, Cabrera said.

The street-level construction, Cabrera added, violated the Philippine Highways Act and the Building Code, banning the construction of a structure that would obstruct a national highway.

Not only does the transit line pose a danger to motorists and pedestrians, Cabrera said, it also "annoys or offends the senses and obstructs or interferes with the free passage of public highway."

"The nature of the case is actually the 'abatement of public nuisance and damages,' because the railways in the middle of Edsa in Pasay has disturbed commuters and residents, and resulted in the disruption of traffic flow on two major intersections in the city," Vice Mayor Alcera said.

The two intersections on Edsa-Tramo and C. Jose Street-are the main routes leading to and from the domestic and international airports.

Complainants have come to describe the MRT as Pasay's "Berlin Wall" for dividing the city into two.

"I live on the south side of Edsa and, before, I only had to cross Tramo extension to get home," Cabrera said. "Now with the MRT, I have to go around to Baclaran or Makati."

This, according to Cabrera, made the life of most city residents miserable.

He added traffic along Edsa "has become unbearable, while business and commerce in the area have gone stagnant."

Cabrera said they filed the 10-page complaint in a private capacity. Under the new civil code, a private person can file a case of public nuisance.

City officials said the filing of the case was supported by a council resolution dated Jan. 15, which called for a civil action suit against the MRT Corp.

On Feb. 6, the council passed another resolution requesting President Macapagal-Arroyo to order an immediate investigation of the MRT and possible violation of the rights of Pasay residents.

Robber stabs pensioner 26 times

By Jerome Aning

AN OLD pensioner was killed by a robber who stabbed him at least 26 times in his house in Sampaloc, Manila before dawn yesterday.

Francisco Domingo Jr., 71, was found by his brother Rodolfo, 66, dead in his room in their house on M. Dela Fuente Street, Sampaloc, at 6:45 a.m., police said.

SPO1 David Tuazon of the city police's homicide section said Domingo's second-floor room was in complete disarray, as well as four other adjoining bedrooms.

The victim's cash and jewelry boxes had been emptied, and several heirlooms as well as the victim's wallet and watch were missing, police said.

A woman neighbor told police she woke up at about 6:45 a.m. and saw lights still burning on the second floor of the Domingo house.

She said she phoned Rodolfo and told him to check on his brother and to switch off the lights. The victim reportedly slept with the lights off.

The victim was found in a kneeling position on his bed, police said. He was bleeding from several wounds believed to have been inflicted by an icepick.

SPO2 Tuazon said the killer might have had one or more accomplices.

Shirley Soliva, a nextdoor neighbor of the Domingos, claimed she saw two unidentified men standing by the gate of the Domingo residence.

Rodolfo and other neighbors claimed they did not hear any suspicious sounds prior to the burglary. The victim's pet dogs and those of neighbors' reportedly did not bark, but investigators said this was not enough to conclude that the killing was an inside job.

Oscar, a son of the victim who lived nearby, said Domingo and Rodolfo had been living together in their ancestral house. He said his father was the custodian of several pieces of jewelry left by a sibling of the victim who recently went to the United States.

Blood drive in Las Piñas

THE LAS Piñas City Health Department will again shop for blood at the SM South Mall on Sunday as part of the annual national 'bloodletting' campaign of the Department of Health.

Las Piñas City health education and promotion officer Aurora Tinio said a total of 389 donors or blood bags were recorded last year, which earned the city government the Sandugo Kabalikat Award and the Outstanding Local Chief Executive 2000 award from the Department of Health for Mayor Vergel Aguilar.

Las Piñas is also a recipient of the DOH's Sentrong Sigla Award, which recognizes Aguilar for his efforts in improving health services and facilities.

Aguilar said this year's bloodletting is expected to draw support from hundreds of city residents and shoppers.

He also invited all local city officials, councilors, barangay chairs and government employees to donate blood.

Aguilar said the donated blood would benefit hundreds of poor Las Piñas patients.

Concert

THE UPSILON Sigma Phi will stage "The Upsilon Classics Concert II," an evening of light classical and popular music, at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 23, 2001, at the Aldaba Recital Hall of the UP Theater in Diliman, Quezon City.

Included in the program are "The Lord's Prayer" to be sung by baritone Gamaliel Viray, "The Impossible Dream" to be performed by a surprise celebrity, and other Upsilon favorites like "O Ilaw," "Can't Help Falling in Love," "When You're Away" and the "Upsilon March" with Ricardo Zamora conducting the orchestra.

The concert is directed by Ian Young and produced by Victor Avecilla with Rodolfo Ponferrada as master of ceremonies. A reception for all Upsilonians, Sigma Deltans and special guests will be held after the concert.

The project aims to promote musical appreciation in the university community. For details, call up the secretariat at 415-3245.

Lost papers

SR. Pauline Therese Pfauwadel, a French national and holder of passport no. 991L-24431, lost her Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) and Certificate of Residence for Pre-Arranged Employee (CRPE).

Anybody who has found the documents may return them to Sr. Pauline Pfauwadel, Anawin Community, Phase II, Area 2, Blk. 340, 1403 Navotas, Metro Manila.

Reunion

THE PHILIPPINE Collegian, the student newspaper of the University of the Philippines Diliman, will be holding a reunion at the UP Bahay ng Alumni on May 18.

All former Collegian staff members are invited.

To receive your invitation, please send your addresses and contact numbers to the Collegian office by fax (920-5301 local 6640), e-mail (kule@peyups.com) or snail mail (401 Vinzons Hall UP Diliman, Quezon City).

Real estate broker robbed of P1 million

A REAL estate broker lost about P1 million to four robbers who were on motorcycles shortly after he withdrew the money from a Mandaluyong bank on Tuesday.

Gener Villegas, 44, of Barangay Poblacion, Mandaluyong, withdrew P940,000 from the PCI Bank Kalentong branch about 11:30 a.m. and was driving home in a silver Kia Pregio van (WBO 851) when four men on three Yamaha sports bikes suddenly blocked his vehicle on Harapin ang Bukas Street, police said.

When Villegas stopped, one of the gunmen got off his motorcycle, approached the car and took the money from him at gunpoint.

Villegas said he was supposed to invest the money in a business he was planning to put up.

Before fleeing, the suspect also took Villegas' cellular phone worth P6,000, preventing the real estate broker from calling for help.

SPO1 Richard Masilang, Mandaluyong Police follow-up division chief, said Villegas went over police files and identified the suspect who approached him as one Fernando Cordova.

Villegas told police that Cordova was the only one among the four men not wearing a helmet.

A police team tracking down Cordova failed to find him at his last known address on Mariveles Street, Barangay Highway Hills, also in Mandaluyong, Masilang said.

"But we are still looking into the possibility that the suspect could just be hiding somewhere in Mandaluyong," he added.

The suspect had a prior arrest for robbery, but he was released after he posted bail.

Police reported that motorcycle-riding robbers have been mostly preying on bank clients over the past months, in Mandaluyong City as well as in neighboring San Juan, triggering speculations that some bank employees might be tipping off the robbers. *Agnes E. Donato*

Ambitious plan unveiled to make Pasig River flow with life again

By Jerry Esplanada

TWELVE years ago, the government started rehabilitating the Pasig River, nearly a decade after the waterway was declared biologically dead.

Today, efforts to improve the Pasig's water quality continue.

But they need to be "complemented by a transformation of values," stressed architect Felino Palafox Jr. in "Pasig: River of Life," a publication of Unilever Philippines, manufacturer of consumer goods like soaps and shampoos and food and beverage.

"This calls for a conversion of what was once back-of-the-house to the front door of development," Palafox said. "What was once space for generator sets and laundry, storage and waste can be transformed into promenades that everyone can enjoy."

He added that "it is a challenge whose time has come."

His firm, Palafox Associates, has been commissioned by the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission to draw up an integrated and updated master plan to rehabilitate the dying waterway.

Palafox's team is a "multi-disciplinary group of experts in various fields, including urban planners, architects, landscape architects, environmental and legal specialists," among others.

The ambitious program "envisions a paradigm shift from the poor treatment of a precious resource to its elevation into a source of national pride."

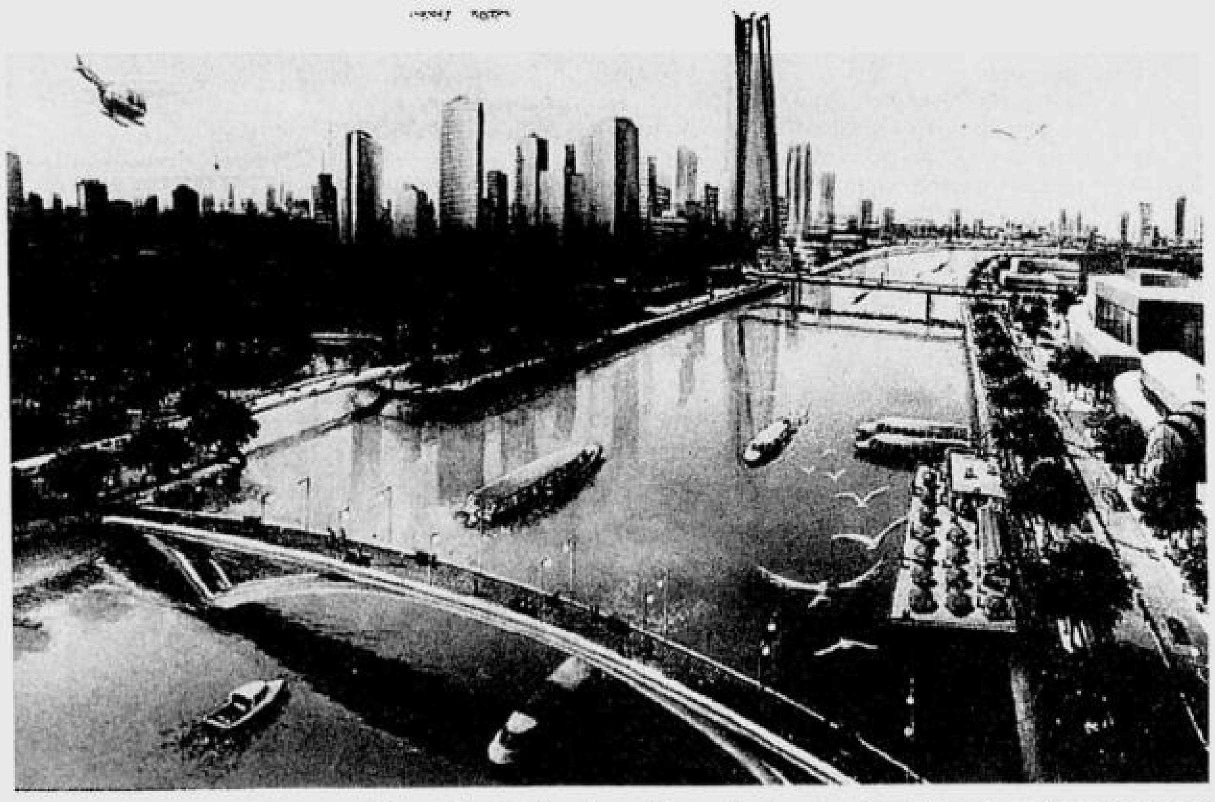
Under the Palafox master plan:

- Multi-use developments along the Pasig River will act as catalysts for renewal.
- The river will stitch the historical, cultural and commercial districts via a vibrant corridor that is defined by appropriate architectural styles, scale and density and enriched by valued heritage structures and opportunities for adaptive reuse.
- Access to the river shall be improved by creating lush and inviting river promenades and parks. For areas that cannot be reached by the public, the private owner or company will be encouraged to beautify their river frontage.
- The river will be developed as an alternative transportation route, improving connectivity between the western and eastern sectors of Metro Manila.

According to Palafox, "the usual objective of waterfront developments is to bring forth the appreciation of a long-neglected asset. All over the world, countries that once abused their rivers have come full circle and resuscitated their precious waterways."

"It is often taken for granted that grand rivers like the Seine, Thames, Hudson and Danube also went through what the Pasig River is going through – years of indifference and abuse brought about by industrialization and so-called progress," he said. "The process of rehabilitation each went through, however, is a long and complex one requiring the highest kind of commitment."

Environmental and urban regeneration goals must be set side by side, for one is ineffectual without the other, Palafox added.



THE RIVER of our pride as envisioned by Palafox Associates will also require a "transformation of values."

Howard Belton, chair and chief executive officer of Unilever, said "the enormity of the task of rehabilitating the Pasig River can be likened to the task of eating an elephant."

"So how does one eat an elephant? You simply cut it into bite-size pieces," Belton said. "It may take time but you'll accomplish the task slowly but surely as you invite more people to partake."

With the Pasig River problem in mind, Unilever has vowed "to ensure that our operations do not pollute, help our neighbors not to pollute, and encourage participation and support for the establishment of Clean River Zones."

Unilever, which has been operating near the Pasig for more than 70 years, is actively involved in the Paco Environmental Enhancement Program, aimed at improving waste management at the Paco public market; Gawad Pangulo sa Kapaligiran, a nationwide search for the cleanest and greenest local government unit; La Mesa Dam tree planting program, where the firm committed to the greening of 25 hectares over the next four years; and "Who Cares" campaign, an appeal to various industries for participation in the rehabilitation of the Pasig River.

Belton pointed out "the concern for the environment does not come from policy, code or principles written in manuals. It comes from people who care and from a culture where the leadership encourages and practices that attitude."

Muntinlupa waiting for DPWH findings on Alabang viaduct

By Alcuin Papa

MOTORISTS coming from Manila and heading toward Alabang, Laguna and Southern Luzon pass through the Alabang Viaduct, which looms over the residential and commercial areas of Muntinlupa.

But the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has yet to certify that this major artery, built more than 20 years ago, is still safe for use.

Earlier reports said pieces of concrete from the viaduct have been falling intermittently on the ground below causing a hazard to motorists and pedestrians. The reports also said the viaduct shakes whenever a heavy truck or trailer passes on it.

The DPWH has promised the Muntinlupa government it would issue an inspection report that would determine the status of the viaduct on or before Feb. 15.

But the INQUIRER yesterday learned that the DPWH has yet to issue the report.

In January, the DPWH's resident ombudsman Ramon Pamular issued a subpoena duces tecum, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, to DPWH National Capital Region Director Salvador Pleyto. Pamular asked Pleyto to comment on the status of the viaduct, which was "allegedly on the verge of crumbling."

Pleyto wrote his response to Pamular on Feb. 6 and said his technical staff would conduct a "site inspection" of the viaduct and would submit a report on or before Feb. 15.

But the office of Muntinlupa Mayor Jaime Fresnedi and the Muntinlupa City Engineering Office of chief engineer Vicente Navarro have yet to receive the report.

A City Hall official, who requested anonymity, said the city council is set to issue a resolution on the total banning of heavy trucks and trailers from the viaduct to reduce the wear and tear on the structure.

As of yesterday, the Muntinlupa City council resolution banning vehicles up to a prescribed weight from using the viaduct has been in effect. Trucks, trailers and buses are now only allowed to pass through the Alabang exit below the viaduct.

In a recent interview, chief engineer Navarro said "all we want is to know whether that structure is safe or not because it is our residents and motorists who might be affected."

He said strong vibrations could be felt whenever heavy vehicles use the viaduct. He said this indicates that the structure is already shaky and unstable.

The DPWH had reportedly said repairs on the viaduct were hampered by "lack of funds."

The deterioration of the viaduct was first reported during the term of former Mayor Ignacio Bunye a few years ago.

Recently, residents and motorists reported seeing slabs of concrete from the viaduct falling on the ground below.

The viaduct is considered a vital artery for vehicles coming from the North and going toward Southern Tagalog. It is also a loading point for commuters from the South going to the Central Business District in Makati and to Monumento in Caloocan City.

Toll raise petition hearing only for Skyway, says PNCC

TOLLWAY operator Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) yesterday clarified that the hearing of the petition filed before the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) seeking an increase in toll rates is only for the Skyway System.

The system includes the elevated level from Bicutan in Parañaque City to Buendia in Makati City and the at-grade level from Magallanes in Makati City to Alabang, Muntinlupa City, PNCC said.

"Contrary to some news items, the hearing held by the TRB is for the petition for the adjustment of toll rates for segments which include the Skyway System," PNCC Tollways Group head Leonilo Javier explained. "These are the 10-km elevated level from Bicutan to Buendia and the 14-km Lower level from Magallanes to Alabang."

Javier said the PNCC has also filed a separate petition for the adjustment of rates for the North Luzon Tollway (from Alabang, Muntinlupa City to Calamba, Laguna) in September 1999. However, the petition will still be presented to the TRB board for its consideration.

No hearing for this particular petition has been scheduled by the TRB, Javier said.

The TRB held a preliminary hearing on Feb. 20, 2001 for the petition for an interim toll fee increase filed by the Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. (CMMTC), an investor in the construction of the Skyway system.

The CMMTC is seeking for an approval of an interim adjustment of the toll rates in view of the peso devaluation.

The CMMTC is asking for P75 for Class 1 vehicles, P190 for Class 2 and P300 for Class 3 vehicles using the elevated section of the Skyway.

The Skyway Corp., operator of the Skyway System's elevated level and at-grade level from Magallanes to Alabang, justified the necessity of putting up 24-hour dedicated lanes for e-Pass users.

"Many people have the impression that the dedicated e-Pass lanes are impractical and are usually idle," said Skyway Corp. general manager Romerico Reganit. "But this is not the case. Our daily statistics show that we should support the 24-hour dedicated lanes to accommodate the ever-increasing users of the e-Pass."

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Ratan Tata (invited)
Chairman
Tata Industries Limited, India

Robert Chandran (invited)
President
Chemical Corporation

The Asian crisis pointed out the need to restructure domestic capital markets to be able to ensure sustainable growth in the region. The World Competitiveness Yearbook 2000 stressed that aside from being underdeveloped, ASEAN-5 capital markets are also viewed as risky, given the perception that insider trading is common in the markets, and that rights and responsibilities of shareholders (especially minority) are not well defined. Though there have been legislation to restructure markets, many economies still need further reform and redirection in this regard.

As Asian markets continue their restructuring process, efforts to include tenets of socially responsible investing as increasingly practiced in industrial countries should not be disregarded. Corporations and investors not only determine economic development, they do influence the manner in which investible funds are sourced, resource utilization, the natural and social environments, the quality of life of the people around them, and ultimately the future of the world.

Invited Keynote Speaker
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Dolphy's Baguio house destroyed by one-hour fire

AN HOUR-LONG fire gutted Dolphy's four-story vacation house in Baguio City on Monday.

Only smoking GI sheets and concrete base were left on the 500-sq m property in Barangay Gibraltar despite local firefighters' efforts to stop the blaze, said Joris Karl Dacawi, Dolphy's neighbor.

"Dolphy frequents this house," said Dacawi, a lawyer of the Free Legal Assistance Group (Flag). "He likes Baguio because this is the only place where he is not mobbed by celebrity hunters."

But Dolphy—Rodolfo Quizon in real life—might not even know about the fire as of Tuesday, said fire officer George Bocanog.

"We have not been able to contact Mr. Quizon because we do not know how to reach him," Bocanog said in Filipino.

"Firefighters responded to a fire alert at 8:04 p.m. Monday, but we still have not been able to determine what caused it," he added. "It took them almost an hour to stop the fire."

Bocanog said only the family of caretaker, Lando Quesada, was around when the fire started.

Dacawi said he also saw vehicles parked outside the house, and these, too, might have been destroyed by the fire.

"This place had always been a quiet place, which is why Dolphy liked it," Dacawi said. "We usually see him in that house although I don't really recall when he was there last. But ask anyone and they will point to that house as Dolphy's. He is an average Gibraltar resident."

Vincent Cabreza and Avigail Olarte, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Music lover gives back what she loves to get

FEW people would know who Baby Pacheco is. But to a small circle in the entertainment industry, she is a popular personality who is expected to hit it bigger with her production company Airtime Entertainment.

Pacheco is no stranger to show business. She is the aunt of Roselle Nava and, until recently, was the young star's manager.

"Managing an entertainment talent can be exhausting because it demands all of your focus," says Pacheco. "I wanted to concentrate on production and since Roselle is in good hands with the ABS-CBN Talent Center, I told her I would just produce shows for her."

Pacheco first ventured into production work by contracting Roselle and other ABS-CBN Talent Center stars for provincial shows and the occasional offshore performances. The experience would serve her well now that she produces her own concerts under Airtime Entertainment.

She says she went into production after she was disheartened with the way the live entertainment scene was taking shape. The shows were repeating each other, she notes.

"I am a big fan of music and I watch as many concerts as I can, whether it's in a big venue like the Folk Arts Theater or a small one," says Pacheco. "But I was becoming rather dismayed because I was just seeing the same music artists over and over again. As wonderful as they are, you can't help but wish there were some variety."

She hooked up with longtime friend Lorna Nagashima, who is based in Japan, and they pooled their resources to produce concerts, "even if we have to start in small live entertainment venues in the meantime.

"Of course, the concerts being in small venues, the profits will also be small but that's all right," says Pacheco. "I guess producing shows is my way of giving back to the entertainment industry, which has given me a really good time as an audience."

The outfit produced the Valentine's Day show "Pop-Jazz @ Ratskys."

Now it is following up that show with three others, also at Ratskys: "The Roselle and Ralion Dance Concert" on March 1, featuring Roselle Nava and Ralion Alonzo; "Rhythm and Divette" on March 15, headlined by Rannie Raymundo and Dessa with Ralion as special guest performer; and "Your Honor . . . Si Arnel at Marissa Po!" on March 28, a comedy-concert with comedians Arnel Ignacio and Marissa Sanchez.

But Airtime Entertainment will not stick to small-scale concerts. Pacheco vows it will continue to mount similar small shows but will build up to several big productions at bigger venues by the third quarter of the year.

Pacheco, too, will consider other artists than the usual headliners.

"We have so many entertainers around who usually don't get as much exposure as their talent deserves because their names don't automatically come up whenever a concert producer thinks of putting up a show," says Pacheco. "Through Airtime Entertainment, we hope to provide our wealth of artists the opportunity to express their creativity and entertain their public."

Tickets to all Airtime Entertainment shows at Ratskys are priced at P500, inclusive of two drinks, and are available at Don Henrico's Tomas Morato, Banawe and Sta. Lucia East; the Concert for Pop Music Philippines in Cubao, Roces and Lagro in Quezon City, and in Makati, Las Piñas and Parañaque. Call Airtime Entertainment at 546-75-00, 825-59-39, 0919-839-3038.

Visit www.ticket2me.com or call 753-34-45 or 1277-61605.

Musical triumph for Jeffrey

HEARTTHROB Jeffrey Hidalgo's fortuitous alliance with budding composer Jacob Israel Clemente proved to be the key to their victory in the recently held "Musika," the second Kenny Rogers Roasters Music Competition.

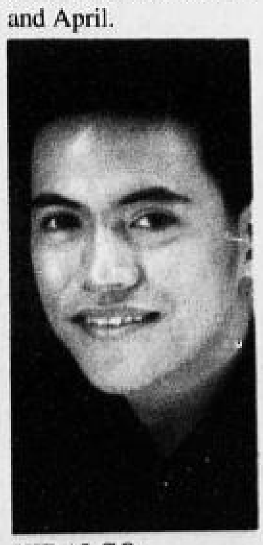
Besting more than 400 entries, Clemente's composition, "Kaya Ko," bagged the grand prize in the competition held on Jan. 26 at the AFP Theater.

"It's a really good song," Jeffrey says. "Jacob should get all the attention he deserves."

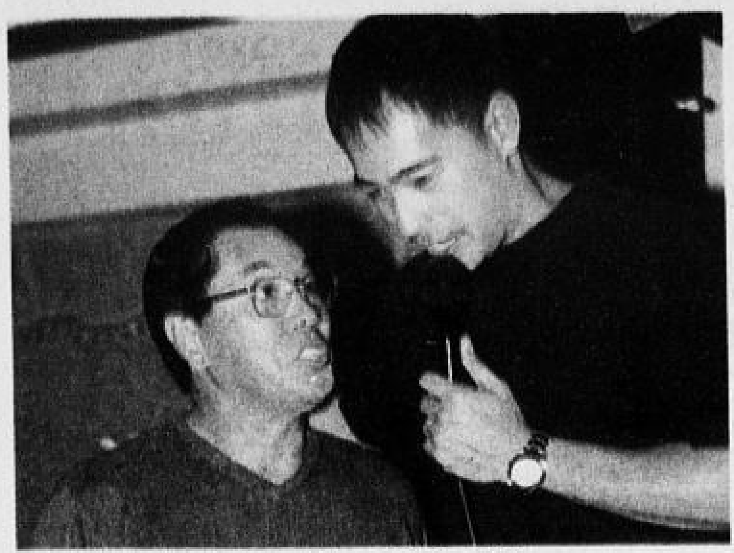
It was a more meaningful victory for Jeffrey, who also interpreted last year's third place winner, "Kabataan Magdiwang," by Mark Regino.

A Star Records recording artist, Jeffrey is now busy preparing for the release of his next single, "Can This Be Love?' the title cut earmarked as a fitting follow-up to "Ang Ganda-Ganda Mo."

He is also set to go on bar tour in March and April.



HIDALGO



ACTOR Cesar Montano jams with Bert Nievera.

VOCAL styling by "The Vamp" Vernie Varga.

Stars who jam at Country Waffles liven up gimmicks on Annapolis

THE ONCE-SEDATE strip of Annapolis Street, Greenhills is alive with music. Credit a lot of this to the arrival of the second franchised outlet of Country Waffles Restaurant, where waffles and flapjacks, with big breakfasts, pastas, grills and skillets are cooked in the good old traditional American way,

But more than just the food, what's drawing hordes of people to the resto is the second level 350-seater music lounge called Bert Nievera's Duelling Pianos. Here, diners can enjoy their food and drinks while listening to first-rate performers singing the pops, the classics and the standards.

At a recent media party hosted by Country Waffles franchise-holders Bert and Carol Nievera, big-name stars from show biz and the music circuit jammed in an impromptu concert to the delight of the press guests. They were enthralled by the powerful voice of Dulce, Asia's singing diva and two-time world singing champion. They were thrilled by the vocal styling of Vernie Varga and Richard Merk, two of our foremost jazz artists. And they were mesmerized by the virtuoso piano playing of internationally acclaimed pianist Raul Sunico, who is in town from New York for a series of performances.

Cesar Montano, whose singing talent is getting as much hype as his acting prowess nowadays, wowed the audience with his baritone. His stunning wife, Sunshine Cruz, who we all know is from the Cruz clan of gifted singers, also obliged with a number, after a bit of loving persuasion by her handsome hubby.

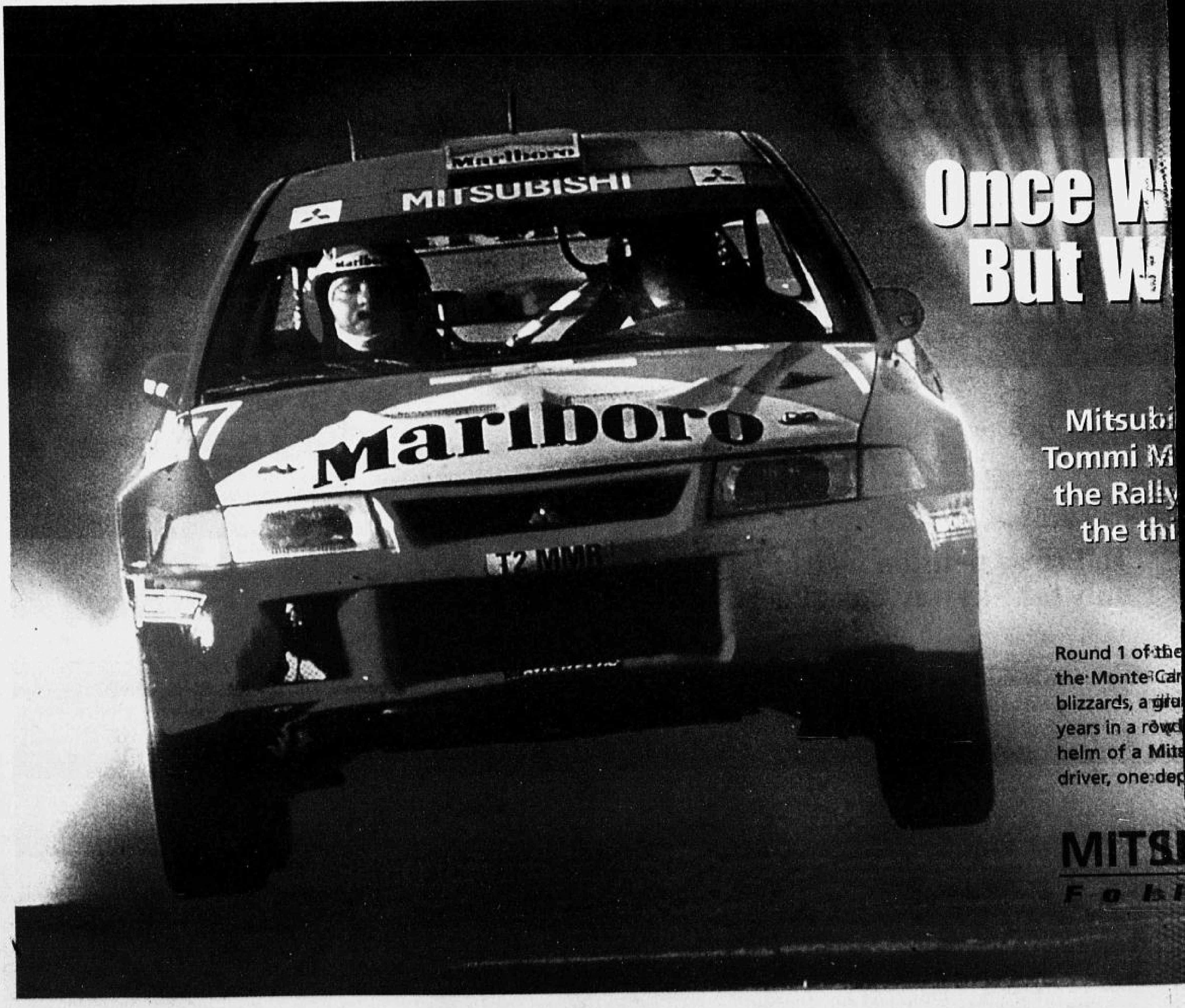
The stable of regular singers at Duelling Pianos also performed that night: Kathleen Lesli (Mondays), Donna (Tuesdays), Theresa Garcia (Wednesdays), Vojee Gaya (Thursdays), Jennie Tiongco (Fridays) and Pam Umali (Saturdays). The regular pianists at Duelling Pianos are Romy San Mateo and brother Martin and Nonong Avila.

Bert Nievera's Duelling Pianos music lounge is open from 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. For reservations, call 722-4413 or 722-4411.

'SAGA,'

THE ALBUM

Four musical geniuses from the '70s get together to write, perform, produce and record an album of 12 new songs. Freddie Aguilar, Rey Valera, Mike Hanopol and Vehnee Satuno call their album "Saga," bannered by the single, "Ang Aking Awit." The album is under the Asiatec Music Productions label and is distributed by Concorde Records.



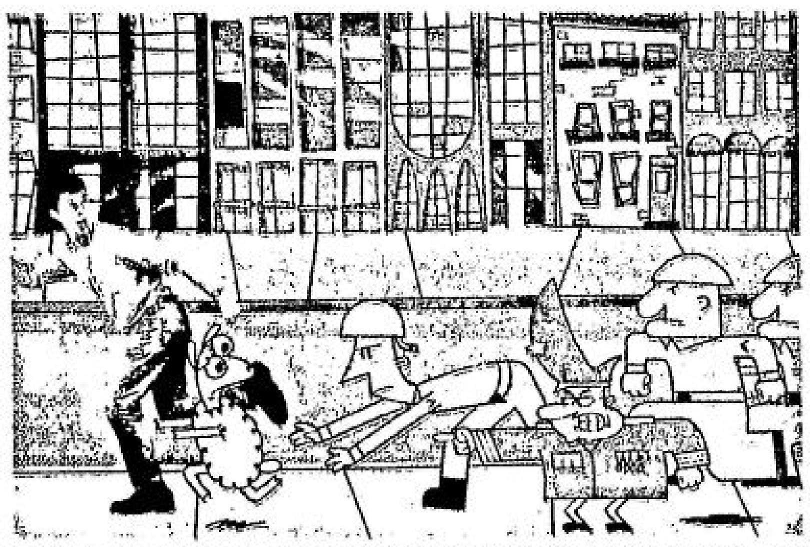
Funny, snappy new series that reflects life in the city is about a sheep

By Leah Salterio

WHEN writer-animator Mo Willems was asked to create a new, original series for Cartoon Network, he thought of only one animal to be the star—a sheep.

"Sheep in the Big City" is Cartoon Network's ninth original half-hour animated series. It premieres on Feb. 25, Sunday, 6 p.m.

The new series chronicles the perilous adventures of a sheep's attempt to make it in a new town.



MO Willems with the animated characters in Cartoon Network's new series, "Sheep in the Big City"

"A buffalo would be silly," maintained Willems, who was in town recently to promote the new series. "A sheep makes funny sounds and they come in pack. If one sheep will watch, I hope all the rest will follow."

The story is about a sheep that runs away from the farm and hides in the big city. There, Sheep faces problems any urban dweller can relate to, like finding a nice apartment or balancing work and social life.

A narrator weaves the story of each half-hour episode, which is broken into cliffhanger chapters, satirical skits and TV spoofs.

"Sheep in the Big City" is a spin-off from Willems' half-hour special, "A Very, Very, Very Special Sheep in the Big City," which was aired on Cartoon Network in 1999.

Decision-making

"Animation takes a long time to make that's why it has taken the series nearly two years to complete," Willems explained. "It had nothing to do with decision-making. I get so much support from Cartoon Network.

"I wanted to make a cartoon in the city because I live in a city and the city is a character for me. The life of people looking for a job and being stuck in traffic in the city is reflected in the series."

He pointed out that the new series uses playful language and a contemporary sense of humor that will appeal even to adults.

"The show is snappy, frantic and combines imagination and real-life situations," he said.

He denied, however, that the series, like some comedy shows, capitalizes on gross humor or sexual innuendoes.

"It's easy to make a dirty joke and there are very few parameters when it comes to that," Willems said. "I want to do something that people, even Asian audiences, can relate to. All I can do is make the funniest and best cartoon and hope it works."

Short films

Willems has made more than 70 short films since he started as an animator, writer and director. He is the creator of Nickelodeon's "The Off-Beats" and Sesame Street's "Suzie Kabloozie" cartoons.

WILLEMS

At 33, he has won several awards for his animation work and three Emmy Awards as writer for "Sesame Street."

"I've been drawing all my life," said Willems, who is based in Brooklyn with his wife, who is about to give birth to their first baby.

"I did my first cartoon in 1988, but when I saw 'Monty Python,' I knew I wanted to work for TV. I was inspired by the work of young guys doing crazy tuff and making a living out of it."

His first cartoon is a two-and-a-half-minute film, "The Man Who Yelled," which he says is very similar to "Sheep in the Big City."

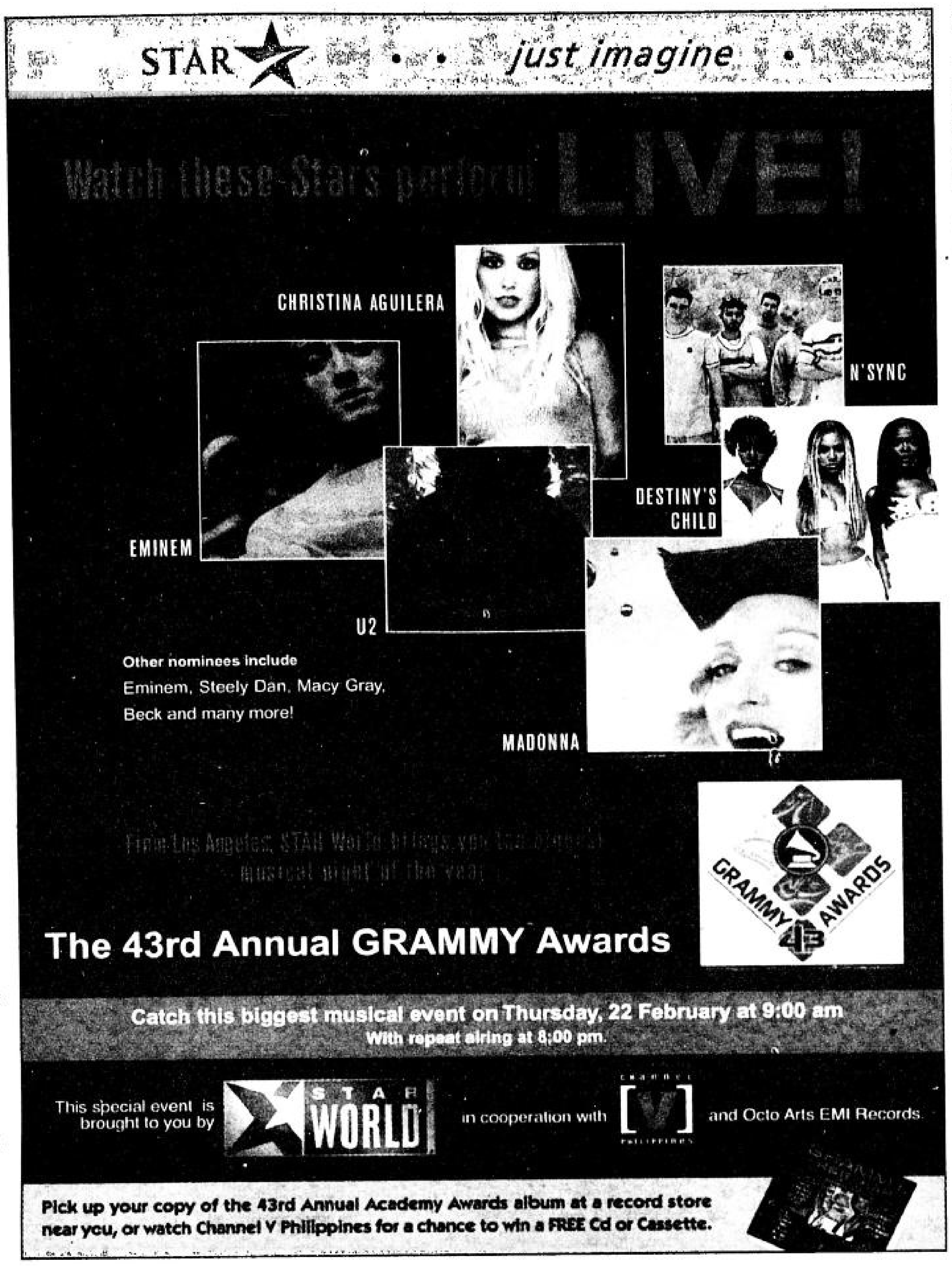
"'The Man Who Yelled' is wacky with a little edgy humor, and its characters appear in 'Sheep,' although you have to be a bit of a connoisseur to spot them," Willems said.

"In a cartoon, I can endlessly play with the characters. I can drop an anvil and make the character still come alive. It should make the world a little funnier, sillier and crazier."

Age, cultural barriers and racial issues are things that Willems takes into account in making an animated series. Yet, he wants something that is generic which will cater to a wider audience.

"This cartoon is something that everyone will understand, yet they will feel specific to it," Willems said.

"I really love cartoons, even the bad ones. If you don't love cartoons, you probably have to go see a doctor."



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Japanese films at Shangri-La mall

SHANGRI-LA Plaza Mall kicks off its filmfest series for the year 2001 with Eiga Sai 2001 at the Cinema 2 on Level 6, Feb. 28 to March 4.

The festival features a powerful lineup of cinema masterpieces by directors Yasujiro Ozu, Yoji Yamada, Yoshitaro Nomura, Kon Ichikawa, Keisuke Kinoshita, Yuzo Kawashima, Seijun Suzuki and Akira Kurosawa. Held with the Japan Foundation Manila Office, the festival aims not only to entertain but also to expose the Filipino audience to a variety of film plots, directorial styles and acting techniques.

On Feb. 27, the festival formally opens with a by-invitation screening at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall of Ichikawa's "Makioka Sisters (Sasameyuki)." Released in 1983, it is the third film version of Junichiro Tanizaki's famous novel and chronicles the lives of four well-to-do sisters who live in Osaka, Japan in 1938. The film has two goals: to recreate this now-vanished lifestyle and to put as many pretty images on the screen as possible while doing it.

Noteworthy of these is Kurosawa's "Hidden Fortress," which is considered a turning point in the award-winning director's period film style and also served as the inspiration of George Lucas' "Star Wars."

Admission is free. Call 635-2079 or 633-4491.

SM CINEMA GUIDE

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1	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
2	DOLBY SURROUND	DEMON GATE
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	PAY IT FORWARD
6	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
7	DOLBY SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
8	DOLBY SURROUND	TUHOG

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 • 7161416

1	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
2	DOLBY SURROUND	DEMON GATE
3	DTS	PAY IT FORWARD
4	DOLBY SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
8	DOLBY SURROUND	TUHOG
9	DOLBY SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	FAMILY MAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
3	DOLBY SURROUND	DEMON GATE
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
8	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
9	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
10	DOLBY SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	TUHOG
12	DOLBY SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	SNATCH
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	PAY IT FORWARD
3	DOLBY SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
4	DOLBY SURROUND	GETAWAY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	WOMAN ON TOP
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
7	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
8	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
10	DOLBY SURROUND	TUHOG
11	DOLBY SURROUND	DEMON GATE
12	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	TUHOG
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	FAMILY MAN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	PAY IT FORWARD
4	DTS	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
6	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
10	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	DEMON GATE
4	DOLBY SURROUND	TUHOG
5	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
6	DOLBY SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
7	DTS	PAY IT FORWARD
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
12	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS

SM SOUTHMALL 8006988 • 8064782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	SNATCH
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
5	ULTRA SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
7	ULTRA SURROUND	DEMON GATE
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	TUSONG TWOSOME
9	ULTRA SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
10	ULTRA SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BOUNCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO
2	ULTRA SURROUND	WHIPPED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MALIKOT ANG AGOS NG TUBIG
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
7	ULTRA SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
8	ULTRA SURROUND	THE YARDS

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	102 DALMATIANS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CONTENDER
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HAPLOS
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG
6	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME

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3 TUHOG
4 DEMON GATE

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1 THE WAY OF THE GUN — in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2 CAST AWAY — in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 PAY IT FORWARD THX — in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 THE ROAD HOME (Phil. Premiere) — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND — Art Film
5 FAMILY MAN — in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 WOMAN ON TOP — in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 SNATCH — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

[illegible]

1 CAST AWAY — in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 WOMAN ON TOP — in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 PAY IT FORWARD — in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1 WOMAN ON TOP THX — in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 PAY IT FORWARD — in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 CAST AWAY — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 SNATCH — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 FAMILY MAN — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 (GOLD DTS) PAY IT FORWARD
5 (GOLD DOLBY) WAY OF THE GUN
6 (GOLD SDDS) FAMILY MAN
7 (GOLD DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 [illegible] 102 DALMATIANS
9 [illegible] TUHOG
10 [illegible] TUSONG TWOSOME

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 TUHOG
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 RESERVE
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
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1 (DOLBY) PAY IT FORWARD
2 (DTS) ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
3 TUHOG

Masagana CINEMA
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1 TUHOG
2 CAST AWAY
3 TUSONG TWOSOME

Starmall Movies
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1 CAST AWAY
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 TUHOG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) PAY IT FORWARD
5 WAY OF THE GUN

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 RESERVE
2 TUHOG
3 TUSONG TWOSOME
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5 DEMON GATE
6 CAST AWAY
7 PAY IT FORWARD
8 WAY OF THE GUN

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2 VERTICAL LIMIT

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1 RESERVE
2 TUHOG
3 HAPLOS

Spring
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1 TUSONG TWOSOME
A ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1
3

GOTESCO CINEMA

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(Manila) tel 734.8568
1 (DOLBY) CAST AWAY
2 WAY OF THE GUN
3 DEMON GATE
4 FAMILY MAN
5 TUSONG TWOSOME
6 TUHOG
7 (DTS) PAY IT FORWARD
8 (SDDS) SNATCH
9 (DOLBY) WOMAN ON TOP

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
[illegible] TUHOG
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 WAY OF THE GUN
4 (SDDS) PAY IT FORWARD
5 DEMON GATE
6 (DOLBY) SNATCH
7 (DTS) CAST AWAY
8 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
9 HAPLOS

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) CAST AWAY
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 TUHOG
4 DEMON GATE
5 (SDDS) SNATCH
6 WAY OF THE GUN
7 (DOLBY) PAY IT FORWARD
8 HAPLOS

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 DEMON GATE
2 HAPLOS
3 (DTS) ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 TUHOG
5 (SDDS) 102 DALMATIANS
6 (DOLBY) PAY IT FORWARD
7 (DOLBY) TUSONG TWOSOME

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 TUHOG

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 TUHOG

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson TUHOG
Lords HAPLOS
Jeanet TUHOG

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3853 / 533.3856
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 PAY IT FORWARD
4 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 TUSONG TWOSOME

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 CAST AWAY
2 TUHOG
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 TUSONG TWOSOME
5 PAY IT FORWARD

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 TUHOG
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 VIRGIN WIFE
5 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
6 HAPLOS

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 TUHOG
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 TUHOG
2 (DTS) TUSONG TWOSOME
3 (DOLBY) CAST AWAY
4 HAPLOS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) TUHOG
2 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
3 WAY OF THE GUN
4 (DTS) TUSONG TWOSOME

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THE CONTENDER
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 TUHOG
5 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel [illegible]
1 HAPLOS
2 102 DALMATIANS
3 IKA - 7 GLORYA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 THE CONTENDER
2 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
3 TUSONG TWOSOME

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 TUHOG
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 HAPLOS

Cabuyao
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1 (DTS) TUHOG
2 (DTS) HAPLOS

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(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 TUSONG TWOSOME

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1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO

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1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 VITAL PARTS
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4 WHAT WOMEN WANT

Berma
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1
2

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 CAST AWAY
2 TUHOG
3 TUSONG TWOSOME
4 102 DALMATIANS

Jade Cinema
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2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 FAMILY MAN
4 (DTS EX) 102 DALMATIANS

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Kuh repeats her Valentine show

POP diva Kuh Ledesma remains the undisputed queen of Valentine shows. Through the years, she has given some of the best and most memorable Valentine concerts this side of the music business, from posh hotel ballrooms to open-air venues like Fort Santiago, all the way to more intimate settings like the Music Museum or Republic of Malate.

This is why Kuh has decided to do a repeat of her successful Valentine show, "Love is the Power," which originally featured her with Lani Misalucha.

For the repeat to be held Feb. 24, 9 p.m. at Republic of Malate, Kuh will share the stage with Bituin Escalante.

Also joining Kuh and Bituin is stand-up comedian, TV host and recording artist Arnel Ignacio, who will provide the comic touch to the show.

For tickets, call 303-3529 to 30 or Headline Concepts at 551-7251 to 55.

Republic of Malate is located at 1769 A. Mabini Street, Malate, Manila.

LEDESMA. To share the stage with Bituin Escalante

'Maarnie' in 'PP2'

COMEDY concert queen Ai-Ai de las Alas is Maarnie Enriquez, one of the ex-presidential mistresses in a musical satire, "PP2: Remember Me," Feb. 23 and 24 at Music Museum.

The show is presented by the creators of the famous "Rock da Vote" series.

Ai-Ai and her special guests will take a derisive look at the Pinoy situation with some of the infamous characters during the 2nd Edsa Revolution.

"PP2: Remember Me" is directed by Floy Quintos and written by Ricky Lopez. For ticket inquiries and reservations, call the Music Museum at 721-0635/ 721-6726 or Ticketworld at 891-5610.

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TUSONG 2 SOME
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	CAST AWAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SNATCH
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PAY IT FORWARD
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	102 DALMATIANS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	WAY OF THE GUN
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	PAY IT FORWARD
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	TUHOG
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	PAY IT FORWARD
MIRAMAR	ARAYY / HUNGER FOR LOVE
ODEON	WAY OF THE GUN
ODEON-2	SHADOW OF MARTIAL ARTS
ROBEN	TUSONG 2 SOME
TANDEM-1	IKA PITONG GLORIA
TANDEM-2	VIRGIN WIFE
TIMES	UNBREAKABLE / REPLACEMENT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	TUHOG
QUEZON-1	TUSONG 2 SOME
REMAR	TUSONG 2 SOME
REMAR-2	SHADOW OF MARTIAL ARTS
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	TUHOG
OCEAN CINEMA-A	BOYFRIEND KONG PARI
OCEAN CINEMA-B	KATAYAN
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-2	SNATCH
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STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TUHOG
CINEMA-2	TUSONG TWOSOME
CINEMA-3	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WAY OF THE GUN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-6	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-7	VIRGIN WIFE
CINEMA-8	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	102 DALMATIANS
CINEMA-12	SNATCH
CINEMA-14	DEMON GATE
CINEMA-15	TUSONG TWOSOME
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-3	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
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Get a copy of the 3rd issue of Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema and learn more about Comedy King Dolphy and other Filipino [illegible]

Watch out for our 4th issue WOMEN IN CINEMA coming out in March!

Pelikula is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U.P. College of Mass Communication.

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Tributes to past Oscar winners

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

TURNER Classic Movies (TCM) and E! Philippines are both mounting retrospective tributes to past Oscar winners this March, building up to the Academy Awards presentation for Film Year 2000 at the end of the month.

TCM leads off its nightly screenings with "Ben-Hur," which won the best picture Oscar in 1959. **William Wyler**'s film stars **Charlton Heston** and **Stephen Boyd**. It was nominated in 12 categories and won in 11—an impressive achievement.

Its stiffest competition for awards in 1959 was "Anatomy of A Murder." Check TCM's programming guide for other Oscar award-winning films' screening schedules.

Meanwhile, E! Philippines screens its Oscar treats on weekends next month. On tap are awardees like "The Bridge on the River Kwai," "The English Patient," "Gandhi," "Lawrence of Arabia," "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," "Love Is A Many Splendored Thing," "All About Eve" and "Patton."

On March 23, the entertainment channel covers the awards ceremonies with a total of 11 hours of programming, including pre- and post-show features and analyses.

Educated guesses

SPEAKING of pre-Oscars analyses, local film buffs are getting all heated up over their "educated guesses" about the putative winners of this year's competition.

The heat is on because they can't seem to agree, since the nominees for the year 2000 are the most eclectic in over a decade.

Time was when most nominees came from American productions, with dramas topbilling major stars in the clear majority. For the year 2000, however, the US film community has chosen to "go global"—and independent—with "small" films and movie artists from many countries up for awards.

Take a look at the best picture nominees: only "Gladiator" and "Erin Brokovich" may be described as traditionally mainstream choices for awards.

"Chocolat" is set in France and directed by a Swede, **Lasse Hallstrom**. It stars the luminous French actress, **Juliette Binoche**, and a key supporting role is played by England's revered **Judi Dench**.

"Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" is a cinematic combination of East and West, fusing Hong Kong with Hollywood, starring Chinese leads like **Chow Yun-Fat** and **Michelle Yeoh**, and directed by **Ang Lee**.

And "Traffic" is based on a British TV series about the drug trade in England and Pakistan, featuring nominated Puerto Rican supporting actor **Benicio Del Toro** (as well as the more established but unnominated **Michael Douglas**.)

In the best actor category, Americans Tom Hanks and Ed Harris are outnumbered by Spaniard **Javier Bardem**, Briton **Geoffrey Rush** and Australian **Russell Crowe**.

The best actress nominees are more homegrown, however: only **Juliette Binoche** comes from overseas, while **Jean Allen**, **Julia Roberts**, **Ellen Burstyn** and **Laura Linney** are American talents, just like in the old, traditional days.

However, the best director nominees restore the foreign flavor in a big way: **Stephen Daldry** ("Billy Elliot") comes from England, as does **Ridley Scott** ("Gladiator"). **Ang Lee**, of course, is Asia's best bet in world cinema, while **Steven Soderbergh** ("Traffic," "Erin Brokovich") is the lone American filmmaker among the nominees.

This mix of talents and types of stories is exciting, but it also makes second-guessing the Academy members' choices a more difficult task this year. Still, the "educated guesses" seem to go this way for the most part:

Steven Soderbergh appears to have a big edge in the best director category because he's nominated for two films, a rare feat in the Oscars' history.

Julia Roberts is conceded to have a lock on the Best Actress Oscar for her feistily idiosyncratic yet committed performance in "Erin Brokovich."

Russell Crowe is being touted as the probable best actor awardee because his performance in "Gladiator" combines power and sensitivity.

Supporting Actor: Jeff Bridges as the US president in "The Contender"—not really because his performance is much better than his rivals,' but because quite a number of US film people feel that Bridges has been sadly underrated all these years, and it's time to make amends with a "long-delayed" award.

Supporting Actress: A toss-up between **Frances McDormand** ("Almost Famous") and **Julie Walters** ("Billy Elliot").

What do you think?

First crush

SOME celebrities were recently asked: "Who was your first crush?" Their candid and nostalgic responses:

Tom Hanks: **"Sophia Loren!** Come on, who else is there?"

Brooke Shields: **"David Cassidy**. I loved the way he said, 'Aaaa Think I Love You!"

Michael Caine: **"Shirley Temple**.—But it wasn't pedophilia, I hasten to add! When I got a crush on her, I was as Young as he was."

. **Heather Graham**: **"Dustin Hoffman**—in 'Tootsie'! No kidding, he was a really good actor."

Courtney Love: **"Judd Nelson** from 'The Breakfast Club."

Kelly Preston: "I didn't have any until **John Travolta**. And I got him—pretty good, huh?"

Penelope Cruz (star of "Women On Top"): **"Marilyn Monroe** and **Shirley MacLaine**. I'm not a lesbian, but you can feel attraction in so many ways!"

The movies they're making

EVER wanted to see **Kevin Costner** dressed like **Elvis Presley**? Well your peculiar fantasy is the command of the producers of "3,000 Miles to Graceland," a film about Elvis-impersonating bandits who rob a casino.

By the way, Costner isn't the only star who tries to look like Presley in the movie: **Kurt Russell**, **David Arquette** and **Christian Slater** also get to wear those trademark sequins, giant collars and scarves.

Fans who been missing **Antonio Banderas** on the silver screen can look forward to seeing "Spy Kids," where the Spanish actor and **Carla Gugino** (a regular on "Spin City") play superspies who decide to retire to start a family.

But their peaceful life is shattered when they're kidnapped by a weird villain, and it's up to their kids (**Daryl Sabara** and **Alexa Vega**) to rescue them, using high-tech gadgets that would delight **James Bond**.

Quote, unquote

ETHEL Barrymore: You grow up the day you have your first real laugh—at yourself.

Quentin Crewe: Children despise their parents until the age of 40, when they suddenly become just like them—thus preserving the system.

Sophie Tucker: From birth to age 18, a girl needs good parents; from 18 to 35, she needs good looks; from 35 to 55, she needs a good personality; and, from 55 on, she needs cash!

G.K. Chesterton: The human race, to which so many of my readers belong, has been playing at children's games from the beginning, which is a nuisance for the few people who grow up.

'Crossover Live' features Escape

ESCAPE: (from left) Odette Felisilda (vocalist), new member Kris Talatad (drummer), Mike Velasco (keyboardist), Yosha (vocalist), Allan Casal (guitarist), Rommel Lumanog (vocalist) and Neil Mison (bassist).

BRILLIANT young souls with a passion for music and performing is the best way to describe hot, young band Escape.

Attitude combined with funk and talent make this group a treat to watch and hear live.

Escape will be the featured band in the monthly series, "Crossover Live," to be held at 9 tonight at Nth Degree along M. Adriatico St., Malate (right across Mla. Midtown Hotel).

The band will party with Crossover listeners and dish out a repertoire of R&B, soul, pop-jazz and dance music.

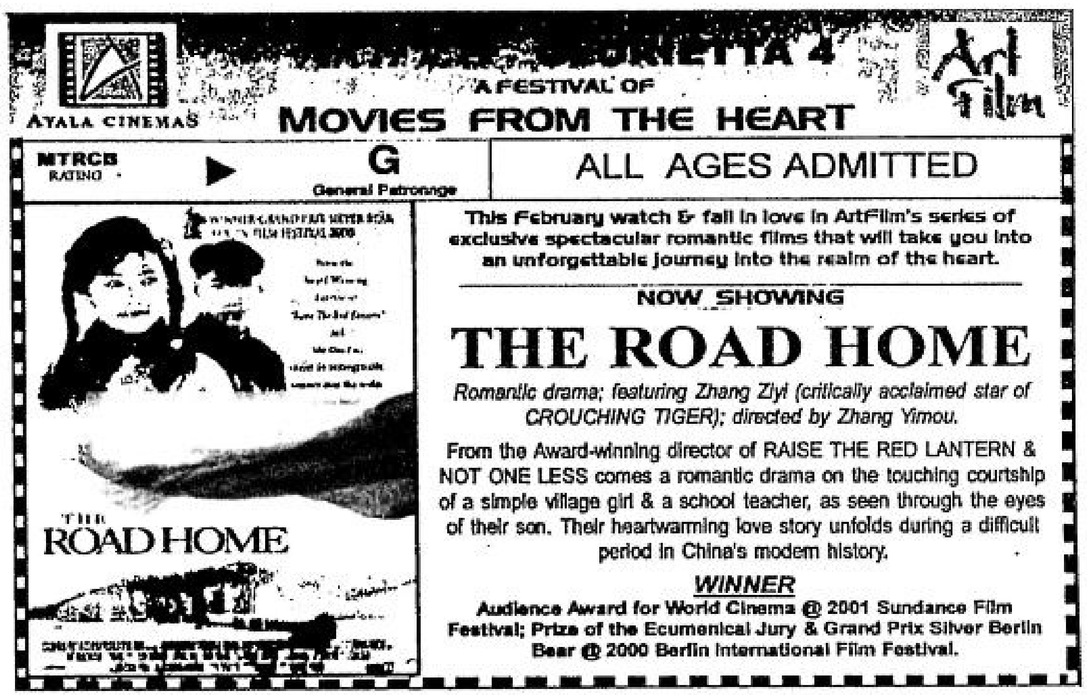
Listen to hits from Michael Ruff, Roberta Flack, Lee Ritenoir, Crystall Waters, George Michael, Destiny's Child, Stevie Wonder and Incognito.

Escape is composed of vocalists Rommel Lumanog and newcomer Yosha, with Kris Talatad on drums, Mike Velasco on keyboards, Allan Casal on guitar and Neil Mison on bass,

Prizes will also be raffled off to lucky Nth Degree habitues and Crossover listeners, courtesy of the evening's sponsors.

This special event is presented by General Motors Autoworld, with Shell Helix, Citibank Credit Card, Imarflex and Café Puro Jade Blend. It is also brought by Ericsson Mobile Phones, Multivitamins and Minerals Clusivol and Jun Saldivar Photography.

Listen to 105.1 Crossover for more details on Escape at Nth Degree, another "Crossover Live!" presentation.



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CAST AWAY - P 13 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00	THE FAMILY MAN - P 13 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00	WOMAN ON TOP - P 13 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30

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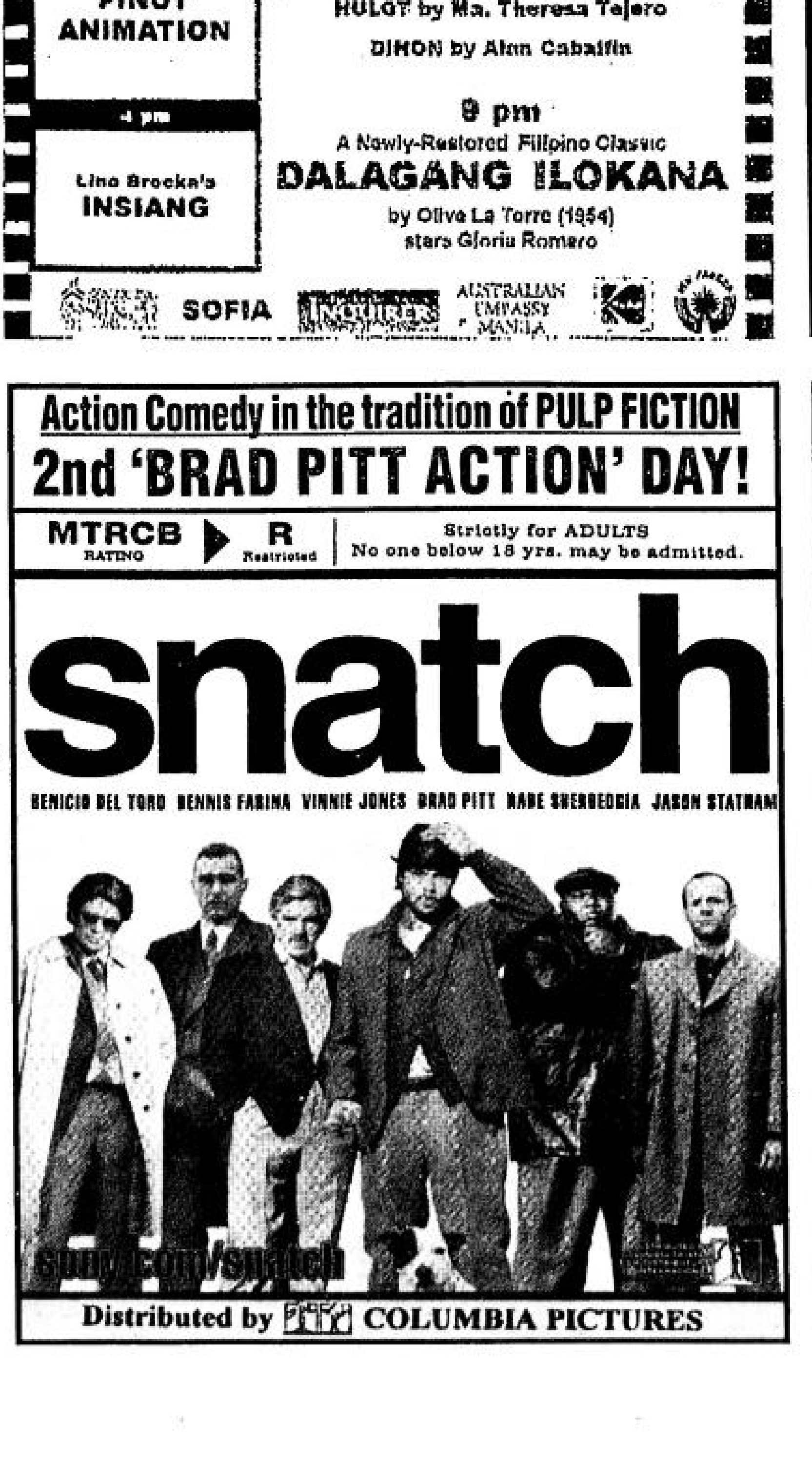

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Edited and Directed By

ENTERTAINMENT

Louie C. Camino, Editor

After 9 very good years, Albert Martinez looks forward to 20 more

By Remy M. Umerez

THERE are still many movie actors who are not seduced by politics. One of them is Albert Martinez.

He had been asked to run for public office but he was steadfast.

"Politics is not my cup of tea," Albert says. "I am sure there are a thousand ways of helping people aside from becoming a politician."

As an actor, Albert has come full circle. He was part of the original Regal babies, along with his brother William, Gabby Concepcion, Richard Gomez and Lloyd Samartino. Fans used to cry out their names, especially when any one of them was paired with Maricel Soriano, Dina Bonnevie or Snooky Serna.

But Albert said goodbye to glamour-boy roles when he left for the United States in the mid-'80s to raise a family.

"The only thing I wanted to do was act," he says. "My heart bled when I left for the United States to seek greener pastures. My wife (Liezl) knew how much I missed the limelight.

"In the evenings, I turned to reading the life stories of great Hollywood actors and tried to learn from them the key to better acting. I kept in touch with my mentor, Joey Gosiengfiao, for an update on Filipino movies. It was important that I was informed so that I would know which direction to take when I stage a comeback."

For 10 years, he worked hard, shifting from one odd job to another. At times, he took two jobs at the same time. While working as a cashier, he sometimes brought his son Alfonso with him to keep him company in the workplace.

Career highs

Albert considers the past nine years the best in his career. He credits Viva Films, who signed him up exclusively, for giving him the best roles.

"When I decided to resume my movie career, I knew major changes had to be made," he says. "Viva was interested, provided I shift to a new image. They wanted me to do offbeat roles. They wanted to package me as an all-around actor, starting as a *contravida*.

"I told myself, if Edu Manzano or Eddie Gutierrez agreed to do it, why shouldn't I? There was this trend of young, good-looking actors playing villain roles."

"Pangako ng Kahapon" leads the list of memorable movies for him. It was, after all, where Viva Films launched him as a leading man playing a congressman obsessed with power.

In "Segurista," he was an opportunist, and his three-way sex with Ruby Moreno and Michelle Aldana opened doors for bolder roles.

"Scorpio Nights," "Sidhi" and "Ekis" launched the bold careers of Joyce Jimenez, Glydel Mercado and Sunshine Cruz, but one should not forget that the leading man of all three sexpots was Albert.

When he feared that too much exposure could harm his career and family, Albert turned to the legitimate stage, performing in such plays as "Paglayang Minamahal."

Daring role

He also treasures "Mumbaki," where he portrayed an Ifugao warrior. On a personal level, it was heartbreaking for home because he had to be separated from his family for three months. The entire "Mumbaki" cast was holed up in the Banaue Rice Terraces where the movie was filmed in its entirety.

While most actors distance themselves from gay roles, Albert had the guts to be daring. He played the lover of Eric Quizon in the romantic-comedy "Pusong Mamon," which featured a much talked-about scene of the two men in a long and passionate kiss.

"Rizal in Dapitan" was filmed with a tight budget, but it brought major acting awards to Albert.

And there has never been a more handsome devil than Albert in "Kapitulo 13," which he did before his Viva contract expired.

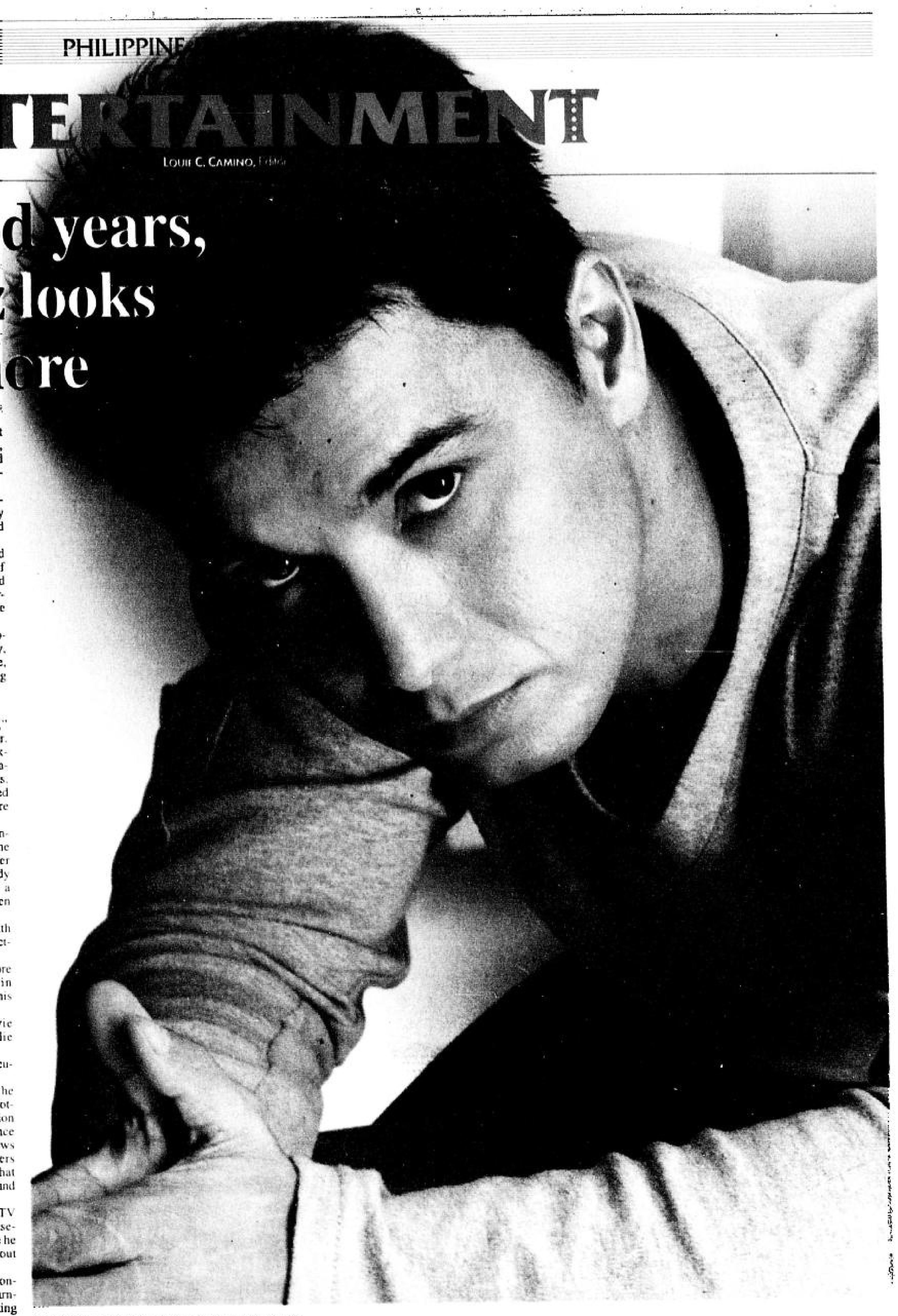
The soon-to-be-released movie "Abakada Ina," directed by Eddie Garcia, is his last movie for Viva.

As a director, Eddie is very meticulous, according to the actor.

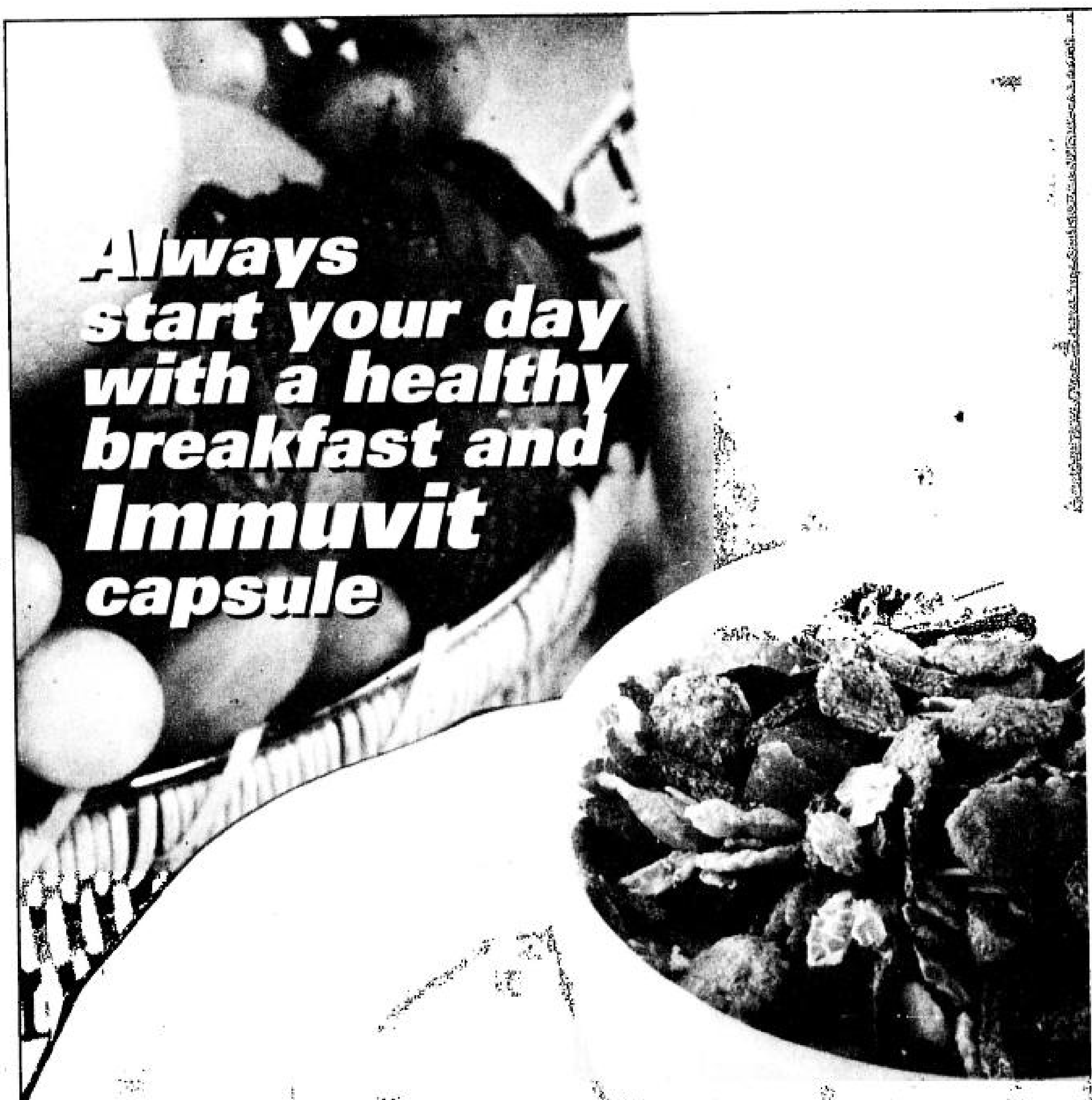
"Everything must be precise," he says of Eddie's style. "Delays in shooting were caused more by production values than availability of stars. Since (Garcia) is an actor himself, he allows his stars to interpret their characters freely. He will simply tell you what the scene entails, mark the blocking and leave everything else to you."

After 12 years, Albert returns to TV through GMA's forthcoming soap series "Ngayon at Kailanman," where he plays a patriarch who sired a child out of wedlock.

Because acting for Albert is a continuous process of discovery and learning, he knows he will keep on making movies for the next 20 years.



ALWAYS acting is what Albert wants to do.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Gokongwei offers to buy Equitable

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE GOKONGWEI family is gearing to regain its foothold in the banking industry by acquiring a majority stake in Equitable PCI Bank.

JG Summit Holdings Inc., the Gokongweis flagship firm, was one of three companies pre-qualified by ING Barings, the financial adviser tasked to review proposals for capital infusion into Equitable PCI.

The other firms shortlisted by the Dutch investment bank were venture firm Newbridge Capital Inc. and Taiwanese conglomerate Fubon Group.

JP Morgan, the other financial adviser tapped to review merger proposals, only pre-qualified the Yuchengco-owned Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., which reportedly offered to buy more than 51 percent of the Equitable PCI for P40 per share.

The country's two biggest lenders—Bank of the Philippine Islands and the Metrobank Group—backed out from an earlier plan to vie for a stake in Equitable PCI.

JG Summit used to own about 27 percent of Philippine Commercial International Bank (PCIBank) before the Gokongweis agreed with the Lopez family on a joint sale of their combined stake to the Go family of Equitable Bank and two state pension funds in May 1999.

The Gokongwei family earned an estimated P17 billion from the sale of its PCIBank stake.

The merger of Equitable and PCIBank created the third largest lender in the country with assets of more than P255 billion and deposits of P160 billion before it suffered heavy withdrawals starting last November. The run was triggered by revelations that Estrada had allegedly kept ill-gotten wealth in a secret account with the bank.

Alberto Reyes, deputy governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, said a committee created by the Equitable PCI board would come up with a decision in a week or two as to whose offer was most attractive.

The committee is headed by Equitable PCI president Wilfrido Vergara with Vitaliano Nañagas of the Social Security System, Rey Palmiery of the Government Service Insurance System, Antonio Go and Gloria Tan-Climaco as members.

Reyes said Equitable PCI could sell unissued shares equivalent to a 30-percent stake to generate P20 billion in fresh funds.

The bank is looking at two approaches: a merger and JP Morgan is looking for a bank to do it with, and the other is fresh infusion of capital which ING is tasked to look into.

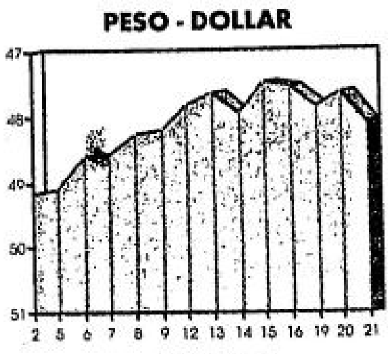
Under the first approach, Equitable PCI will lose its identity, while proposals for a capital infusion will allow it to keep its name. At any rate, Reyes said all offers received by the lender insisted on management control.

Equitable PCI was believed to have lost as much as P40 billion of its deposits after it was linked to the secret accounts of Estrada.

The Go family owns about 30 percent of Equitable PCI; SSS, 25 percent; GSIS, 12 percent; the Romualdez family, 7 percent, and the rest are with Equitable Investments Inc. and the investing public.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

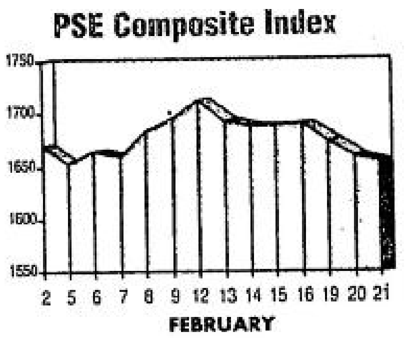
₱48.12 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Feb. 21, 2001

¥116.42 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.42 as of 5 p.m., Feb. 21, 2001

GOLD:$256.30/256.80
per ounce Hong Kong,
Feb. 21, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks down slightly



SHARES closed yesterday at a marginal loss as investors stayed away after the Supreme Court suspended the filing of criminal complaints against deposed leader Joseph Estrada, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 4.22 points, or 0.3 percent, to 1,654.86 after falling 0.9 percent Tuesday. The index has lost 2.1 percent since Monday.

"This is still considered a consolidation phase," said Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas.

AP

(See stock market report on Page B2).

Banks' bad loans slipped to 15.1% in December

THE BAD loan ratio of the commercial banking sector has improved to 15.1 percent of total loan portfolio in December, down from its peak of 16.26 percent the previous month.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said modest loan growth of 2.5 percent as well as a reduction in the volume of non-performing loans by 4.8 percent in December helped improve the industry's loan profile.

However, the NPL ratio in December was still significantly up compared to the year-ago level of 12.46 percent.

The BSP said all sectors comprising the commercial banking industry posted higher loan levels that helped pull down the NPL ratio to 16.51 percent for universal banks from 17.8 percent in November; to 17.58 percent for regular commercial banks from 18.92 percent, and to 3.8 percent for foreign banks from 3.88 percent.

The central bank also pointed out that increased restructuring worth P8.7 billion and net Ropoa (real and other properties owned or acquired) worth P7.6 billion also pushed the bad loans ratio down.

Gross restructured loans increased by 9.6 percent while banks' holdings of foreclosed assets went up by 6.3 percent to P128.2 billion in December or 4.3 percent of total assets from the previous month's P120.6 billion or 4.1 percent of total assets.

Overall asset quality also went up due to a 1.3-percent decline in non-performing assets as total resources rose by 2.1 percent. This trimmed the bad assets ratio to 12.5 percent from 12.9 percent last month.

Non-performing loans refer to those accounts whose principal or interest had been unpaid for 30 days or more after due date or even after these have become past due.

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Before you make any plans for the day, check your account balance!

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Call a time out from child's play. See your bills directly on your PC and pay them through our Check-Free Payments facility.

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- Review your account transactions from as far back as 60 days
- Monitor payments and balances of your BPI credit card, housing or auto loans
- Pay to more than 80 different merchants online via the Check-Free Payments facility
- Make Stop Payment Orders on checks
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Justice of the pitch

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THEY were not only fake, they were even fictitious. They don't even exist in the real world. The amount was also so incredible, it was not scary or alarming or anything near. Except perhaps for news media.

Of course I refer to the counterfeit dollar bonds and notes which, just the other day, the police seized in Cagayan de Oro City in Mindanao. All in all, the counterfeit items were said to be worth $2 trillion. Wow! Where have you been all our lives?

In pesos, you see, the amount could easily reach P97 trillion. Let's say they were the real thing. Then we would have no more budget deficits. Our government could even let all tax evaders and smugglers go scot free. For the next hundred years, at that!

* * *

IMMEDIATELY, you realize the whole thing had "scam" written all over it in bold capital letters. A $40-million US Federal Reserve bond! Somehow you get a feeling you've seen it somewhere before. Let me see . . . in Introduction to Creative Writing.

When I was still a multi-billionaire like the man named Band . . . Wrist Band . . . I actually knew that the denomination of such bonds was only $10 million tops. Hah, $40-million bond! Who were the syndicate trying to fool? Just the ordinary OCWs, I guess.

Still, PNP chief Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza told me that some rich guys were actually drawn into the scam. It's just that they won't come out, he said, maybe to avoid embarrassment. Greed, sir, can be quite embarrassing.

Mendoza was the "frozen" policeman. Out of favor in Wrist Band's administration, he was assigned to the Transnational Crime Center. It's there he got wind of the modus operandi of foreign crime syndicates. Don't look now, but even crime is going global.

In the care of the center, believe it or not, are facts and figures on large scale smuggling. Syndicates abroad see smuggling into our country as bigtime business. They are well organized. How do you fight them? By talk, how else? Yak, yak, yak, yak!

* * *

MAYBE even Justice Secretary Hernando Perez should start to worry about the all-talk-no-action policy of other government agencies. *Nga naman*! If nothing happens in all this noise about "healing with justice," nobody else but Perez gets the blame.

The cute administration of Gloriaetta, as you know, wants to file several millions of court cases all at the same time. Gambling. Smuggling. Plundering. Name the crime, some people in and behind the administration are asking Perez for results muy pronto.

From the camp of the "moralists," for instance, calls are coming out every other 30 seconds for Perez to put so-called "jueteng" lords into jail. So where's the evidence? Well, that's his problem. Others already reaped good publicity. What more does he want?

The DILG just made a big show out of a campaign against jueteng. It even featured its Secretary Jose "Taho" Lina, whose claim to fame was his *taho* exposé years ago as a senator. How dare the DOJ ask such a man for evidence!

It's such a mundane task that the next thing you know, this DOJ is also filing cases against Luis "Chavit" Singson. He should get immunity. Have pity *naman*. He already lost memory. He just couldn't remember about jueteng from 1986 to 1998.

* * *

FROM big business, which helped to catapult this cute administration to power, they have a simple request. Why doesn't Perez put to jail some bigtime smugglers? Sure, while he's at it, he can also try to solve the national debt.

Smuggling has only become so lucrative, bigtime syndicates control it. Thus the syndicates have become so powerful, they can demand a "little cooperation" from high places. From where just exactly, Perez can't even hope to find out.

I heard that, as soon as Perez got the job at DOJ, some politico set an appointment to bring to Perez a certain "businessman." To what did Perez owe such a superstar status? The "businessman" was paying Perez a courtesy call. Perez said next time *na lang*.

It turned out that the "businessman" operates in Batangas, which happened to be Perez's home province. It was a little business in which the businessman brought in billions of pesos worth of goods . . . well, secretly. For this, he even built his own private pier.

* * *

AMONG street thugs it's called the *padrino* system. Anybody who wishes to jail somebody, must contend with some politicos, who may even be members of the now-showing Lakas-NUCD Party.

Naturally, they make the sales pitch for and in behalf of those whom Perez is trying to bring to justice. You know—let's talk about it first. Talking about it, precisely, was proposed to Perez regarding the BW case for stock market manipulation.

It seems that the moment he entered the DOJ building, Perez inquired about the case. Why were cases filed against only a couple of guys? Answer: No evidence was given by the SEC against the others.

Before you know it, the man behind the great grandmother of all stock scams, Dante Tan himself, already had a *padrino* who asked Perez, please, just make Tan another one of those state witnesses. Hmm. But where's the justice in that pitch?

* * *

BASED on word from the DOJ, Perez already turned down the offer from Tan's *padrino*. Perez must have thought that, good golly, Tan is the principal suspect. Many others whose names were dragged into the case could become state witnesses. Not Tan.

Sure, some of them even made money, and they included honorable senators. But while some of them made money, some of them also lost money. It seems therefore that, if you make money out of Tan's foolishness, you clearly committed a crime. Since when?

Thing is, Perez believes that Tan and company could not have done it without help from other groups. True! Everybody in the stock market knew all along that certain stockbrokers were involved. It's just that they were some sort of protected species.

Epson putting up ₱5.4-B printer parts factory in RP

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DOMINANT Japanese printer manufacturer Epson is pumping in P5.4 billion for a new plant in the country which will produce various components of computer printers.

Epson's new investment, through its subsidiary Epson Precision Philippines Inc., accounted for half of the P10.92 billion worth of projects registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority in the first six weeks of the year.

Projects registered with Peza are eligible for generous fiscal incentives such as income tax breaks, tax- and duty-free importation of capital equipment, and preferred income tax rates.

The project is the second major investment of Epson. The first was a factory producing inkjet printers and circuit boards established at Lima Technology Center in Batangas two years ago.

Epson is planning to produce quartz-based products—AT-strip chips, surface mounting device (SMD), quartz and SMD oscillators—that are key components of computer printers.

The wholly owned Japanese company will build its new plant at the Light Industry and Science Park I and this is expected to complement its inkjet printer factory at the Lima Technology Center.

The new project is expected to generate $39.425 million in annual export earnings and create 870 new jobs. The factory in Lima, Batangas, currently produces 500,000 to 600,000 inkjet printers a month.

Epson is the latest in a string of Japanese electronic companies that are turning to the Philippines as their alternative production hub. Toshiba Computers has decided to relocate its US operations for laptop manufacturing into the Philippines while Fujitsu has expressed interest in expanding its hard disk drive plant here which will eventually be bigger than its Thailand operations.

Other projects approved by Peza from January to Feb. 15 this year are those of Nidec Precision Philippines Corp. (P923.4 million), Pricon Microelectronics Inc. (P357.33 million), and Megaworld Corp. (P292.137 million).

MICRO FINANCE BANK

Ambassador Jesus Tambunting, chair and CEO of Planters Development Bank, receives from Peter Wolcke, CEO of International Finance Corp. the documents formalizing the IFC's role in the establishment of the P100-million Micro Enterprise Bank of the Philippines (MEP) to be based in Davao. Looking on is Vipul Prakash, IFC country head in the Philippines.

Broadband Phils. gets ₱1-B loan for expansion

BROADBAND Philippines, an upstart Internet company, has secured a P1-billion loan from Canadian firm Export Development Corp. for the expansion of its wireless broadband network in Metro Manila.

This came shortly after Next Century Partners, a local affiliate of the George Soros Group, bought 18 percent of the company from Jose Perez de Venecia III for $6 million two weeks ago.

The investment reduced De Venecia's stake to 42 percent from 60 percent. The remaining 40 percent is held by US-based Callahan Group.

EDC, which is a wholly owned corporation of the Canadian government, packaged a six-year term loan.

The loan is payable in 14 equal quarterly installments starting March 15, 2004. It has a three-year grace period. The interest rate will be based on the Libor rate plus 2 percent.

"The loan will help us build our network of 600 e-buildings in Metro Manila within three years," said De Venecia in a press conference yesterday. *Anthony O. Alcantara*

Dao Heng to acquire 13% equity in BDO

By Doris C. Dumlao

DAO HENG Bank Ltd. of Hong Kong is acquiring a 13-percent stake in Banco de Oro through a share-swap deal finalized with the banking arm of retail tycoon Henry Sy.

Sources yesterday said BDO and the Dao Heng group have already finalized the terms of the merger with Dao Heng's Philippine unit. The deal will involve a combination of cash infusion and a share-swap arrangement.

"We're simply awaiting the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas," a source from the Guoco group said.

The source said that only the 60-percent stake held by Dao Heng Hong Kong in the Philippine unit would be converted into a 13-percent stake in BDO and a single board seat representation.

The remaining 40-percent stake in Dao Heng Phils., held by the Dao Heng group's holding company (Guoco Philippines Holdings Inc.), will be sold to pay off the company's debts.

"We're selling for cash. But Dao Heng Hong Kong will maintain a minority stake in BDO," the source said.

Guoco Holdings, which has already trimmed down its debt burden from P4 billion to around P1.2 billion, is planning to retire more debts in line with its corporate restructuring.

The sources said that part of the proceeds from the sale of Guoco's 40-percent stake would be used to pay off some liabilities with BDO itself.

For its part, BDO believes it will benefit from Dao Heng Bank's expertise in consumer banking. Also, the merger is expected to expand the reach of the bank with the addition of the Dao Heng Bank Phils. branch network.

A BDO-Dao Heng merger will create the 14th biggest bank in the Philippines.

Dao Heng Bank Phils. currently ranks 46th among the country's commercial banks with 15 branches and an asset base of P5.25 billion. BDO, for its part, is the 17th biggest bank in the country with total resources of P45.4 billion.

BDO is set to go public in compliance with the BSP requirement on banks to offer at least 10 percent of their equity to the public within three years after getting their licenses as expanded commercial banks or universal banks.

DISCLOSURES

PUREFOODS Corp. denied reports that it was acquired by **San Miguel Corp.** for P8.8 billion. **Ayala Corp.** is talking with several interested parties, including SMC, except that to this date, no definite agreement has been reached or concluded.

* * *

ACTIVE Alliance Inc. said it has no knowledge or any information that caused the decrease of its share price on Feb. 20.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Dizon Copper-Silver Mines Inc.** has accepted the resignation of lawyer Francis Gustilo as director of the company. Members of the board elected Rafael Dizon to the position.

* * *

SUN Life Financial Services of Canada Inc. will hold an annual and special meeting of shareholders on April 25. The record date is March 7.

* * *

THE LISTING of 108,907 common shares of **First e-Bank Corp.** is set for Feb. 22. This brings the total number of common shares listed to a total of 338,242.

* * *

THE BOARD of **A Brown Co. Inc.** has authorized the extension of its stock option plan for another six months or until Aug. 31. It likewise suspended the payment on the subscriptions and the provision on the retirement and separation of participants. *Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, February 21, 2001)

OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE		VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70	70	69.5	70	84,200
China Banking Corp.	700	700	700	700	700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	44,400
Global Business Bank Inc.	65.5	65.5	60.5	64.5	2,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	231	232	229	232	42,010
Philippine National Bank	35.5	36	35.5	36	39,300
Phil. Savings Bank	28	30	28	30	3,400
Security Bank Corp.	25	25	25	25	126,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28	27.5	27.5	25,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	28,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1150	1160	1150	1160	7,320
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	16,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	970	970	960	965	6,540
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	9,400
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.7	3,040,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	710	710	710	710	20
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	40,000
Phil. Long Dis. Tel. Co.	815	835	815	820	76,580
Ivantage Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.08	1,148,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.075	0.0775	0.075	0.0775	138,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	53	54	53	53	3,700
Manila Electric Co. B	61.5	62	61.5	62	753,000
Petron Corp.	1.94	1.98	1.92	1.94	1,328,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.08	23,048,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.3	1.34	1.3	1.34	1,136,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.88	0.88	320,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	985,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12	12	11.75	11.75	127,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	38.5	38.5	37.5	38	287,300
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	11,000
RFM Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.26	1.28	1,224,000
San Miguel Corp. A	50	50.5	50	50.5	115,800
San Miguel Corp. B	60.5	61	60.5	61	19,700
Universal Robina Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	40,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	10,000
Ayala Corp.	8.1	8.1	8	8	785,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.64	1.64	1.6	1.6	192,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12.25	12	12	1,100
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	130,000
APC Group Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	550,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	135,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	90,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2	2	2	2	12,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.05	3.2	3.05	3.15	6,938,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.195	330,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	260,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	620,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	270,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.46	1.5	1.46	1.48	885,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	23.75	24	23.75	23.75	185,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	50,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	3,140,000
Ionics Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.5	151,400
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.65	2.75	1,557,000
Macroasia Corp.	2	2.04	2	2	210,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.92	0.95	0.92	0.94	3,410,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	70,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	3	3	3	3	49,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	900,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.64	0.65	0.63	0.63	3,030,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.76	0.77	1,070,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	3,760,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.32	240,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	50,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	40,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	7,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	0.68	0.95	0.68	0.95	800,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.2	7.2	9,000
Music Corp.	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	103,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	310,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	140,000
Philtread Tire & Rubber A	4	4	4	4	39,000
Reynolds Philippine Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	500,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	220,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.75	13	12.5	13	805,300
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	90,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	670,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.7	0.67	0.67	16,950,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.7	0.7	390,000
Manila Jockey Club	17	17	17	17	2,800
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	92,100
Ayala Corp. Pref.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	4.1	4.2	4	4.15	612,000
Jollibee Warrants	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	133,300
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.4	0.44	0.4	0.44	70,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	279,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	4,950,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.34	0.36	0.34	0.35	1,800,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	940,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.43	3,990,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.85	5,193,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	200,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	500,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.49	60,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	10,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	28,000
SM Development Corp.	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	600,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.9	7.1	6.9	7.1	3,180,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	1,310,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	6,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	10,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	3,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	3,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	7,200,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	80,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	5,700,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	23,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	202,000,000
Pacifica	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	425,470	38,917,940.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	636,784,600	263,292,730.00
PRO	22,761,000	74,522,400.00
Mining	21,390,000	241,450.00
OIL	232,700,000	1,434,100.00
GRAND TOTALS:	914,061,070	378,408,620.00

	AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	619.36	UP	0.41
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,249.99	DOWN	19.60
PRO	645.93	UP	8.45
Mining	1,327.28	DOWN	29.88
OIL	2.01	UNCH	0.00
All Shares Index	765.62	DOWN	7.06
Composite	1,654.86	DOWN	4.22

NO. OF ADVANCES: 19; NO. OF DECLINES: 40; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 60; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 119; NO. OF TRADES: 2,518

CURRENCIES

Feb. 21, 2001 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.095890	1.000000	47.8010
Japan	Yen	0.009474	0.008645	0.4132
United Kingdom	Pound	1.586411	1.447600	69.1967
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.138310	0.126208	6.0329
Switzerland	Franc	0.651153	0.594177	28.4023
Canada	Dollar	0.711710	0.649435	31.0436
Singapore	Dollar	0.629461	0.574383	27.4561
Australia	Dollar	0.573044	0.522903	24.9953
Bahrain	Dinar	2.907026	2.652661	126.7998
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.292230	0.266660	12.7466
Brunei	Dollar	0.628377	0.573394	27.4088
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000104	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.025689	0.023441	1.1205
UAE	Dirham	0.298404	0.272294	13.0159
Korea	Won	0.000890	0.000812	0.0388
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.912500	43.6184
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.466554	22.3017
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139110	6.6496
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.414074	19.7932
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.066314	3.1699
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022620	1.0813
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000471	0.0225
Finland	Markka	0.168187	0.153471	7.3361
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004552	0.2176
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005484	0.2621
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.02262	1.0813
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.158636	55.3840

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Relann O. Agulan
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Marketing Trophy
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Emmanuel A. Aquino
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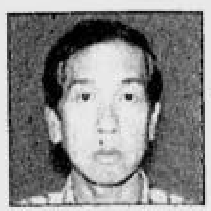
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Marketing Trophy
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Marketing Trophy
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6th **Ronnie B. Ronquillo**
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NWH43 - HSO

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Senior Area Mgr.
SLW6 - RSO

8th **Agripino P. Conocido**
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SLW1 - RSO

9th **Teresita E. Tuazon**
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10th **Anita S. Dalire**
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Alda, Erlinda M.	SLW14
Alegria, Visaya T.	RWLN17
Alim, Yolanda V.	RMS1
Ang, Ma. Elizabeth S.	RSM13
Anicoche, Lillian V.	NWH03
Aquino, Lydia S.	CLA40
Araneta, Leticia T.	SWM16
Bandola, Norberto T.	RMS4
Barrozo, Herma G.	RMNP2
Bastero, Corazon S.	CVRR5
Batan, Ludivina P.	CLNL2
Bautista, Thelma S.	LM26
Bayao, Ricardo A.	RWLS7
Bisda, Ma. Theresa T.	RWLS4
Bracamonte, Gerlie D.	RMS7
Bracamonte, Delfin R.	RML1
Bueno, Delia A.	CLA13
Buensalida, Amado C.	MM37
Buno, Nelia G.	R11L01
Cabiling Jr., Zosimo A.	CLS35
Cabrido, Meriam C.	RCV02
Calawigan, Samuel J.	RCM3
Calderon, Araceli A.	HWLP1
Camins, Rosalia F.	SWM5
Canlas, Norma P.	RMN14
Castro, Rogelio M.	RMS12
Chua, Monina L.	CVR8
Cielo, Angelita I.	MM11
Cloma, Marilyn A.	RCM28
Conde, Felicidad E.	RMNP10
Conocido, Agripino P.	SLW1
Cordero, Divinia M.	SLW12
Cruz, Lucia A.	CLB03
Cunanan, Antonietta B.	HMN29
Curayag Jr., David S	CLN36
Custodio, Samuel L.	CVRP1
Daenos, Fernando B.	CLN43
Dalire, Anita S.	CVR1
De Guzman, Ephraim L.	RMS15
De Guzman, Fe M.	SLW11
Del Rosario, Natividad V.	RSE5
***Delos Reyes, Julie E.**	**RWLS1**
Desear, Lilia R.	RWLS8
Dolores, Delia L.	HWM01
Ehiorobo, Susan V.	RMC1
Escalona, Marissa M.	SLW10
Fernandez, Leoncia A.	R11R01
Filamor, Elnora G.	RMS2
Flores, Angeles G.	RMC4
Gallardo, Revelyn S.	CLS34
Gonzales, Herminio R.	SLW18
Guiao, Edgardo B.	CLB69
Hermogeno, Ricardo G.	RMN5
Hermogeno, Pacita Q	LM14
Herno, Shirley L.	RML2
Ilustre, Delia M.	SLW6
Jauhali, Evangeline L.	RCM25
Lastimosa, Isidro L.	RCM10
Leaño, Danilo M.	RSM11
Lopez, Erlinda E.	LM08
Lopez, Edgardo M.	NWH28
Lozano, Ma. Merly C.	RMC5
Macamay, Estrellita G.	NMR17
***Malinao, Thelma L.**	**RCM6**
Mallari, Marilou O.	CLB68
Mananguite, Eufelia Zoraida A.	REV09
Manlutac, Amelia T.	CLS14
Mas, Teresita E.	SWM1
Mendoza, Aurora M.	CVH55
Miranda, Vivian T.	CLN6
Monticado, Genovevo S.	WVC3
Mortel, Cherrie M.	RMNP6
Muyano, Yolanda T.	CLS38
Navales, Marilyn A.	RSM20
Ona, Nora Imelda R.	RMNC1
Ong, Catherine C.	SWM6
Palacio, Ligaya S.	RN11
Pangilinan, Teresita B.	RMC2
Panti, Estrellita L.	MM72
Peña Jr., Nathaniel S.	HMN32
Peñalver, Harry Q	RCM9
Pinuela, Ma. Lenie R.	SLE5
Rabago, Maxima, C.	NWH06
Ramos, Bernardita L.	RCM2
Ranchez, Ligaya U.	CVR50
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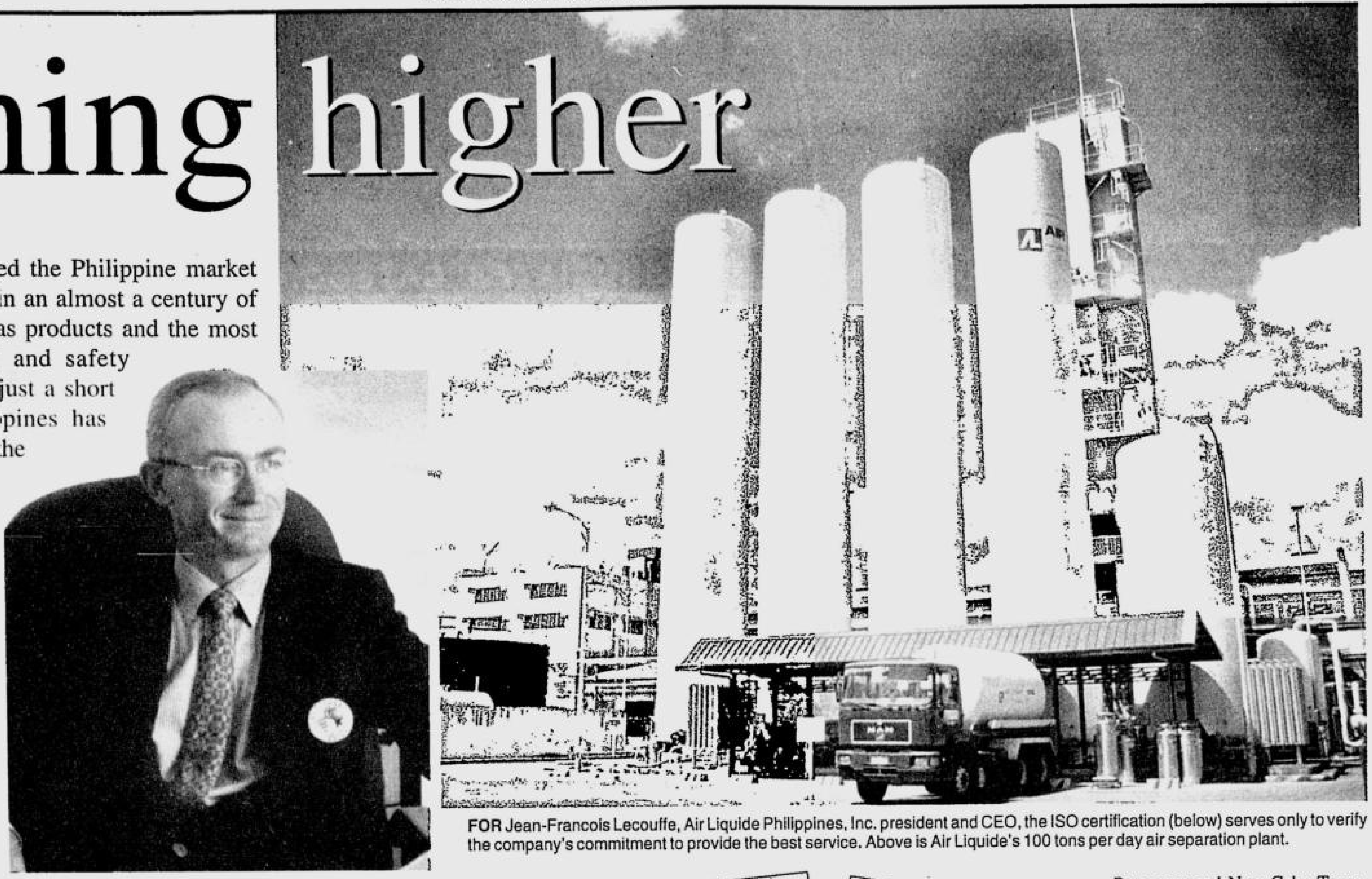
Aiming higher

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

WHEN Air Liquide entered the Philippine market five years ago, it brought in an almost a century of experience in providing gas products and the most stringent quality control and safety programs. No wonder, in just a short span, Air Liquide Philippines has established itself as one of the country's top industrial gas manufacturers.



FOR Jean-Francois Lecouffe, Air Liquide Philippines, Inc. president and CEO, the ISO certification (below) serves only to verify the company's commitment to provide the best service. Above is Air Liquide's 100 tons per day air separation plant.

Today, the company adds another milestone as it formally receives its ISO 9002 certification in tonight's Awarding and Customer's Night to be held at The Peninsula Hotel Manila. "The certification only serves to verify our commitment to provide the best service. Since we are part of a worldwide network, the company would like to employ the strictest standard being adopted by Air Liquide elsewhere in the world," said Jean-Francois Lecouffe, president and CEO of Air Liquide Philippines.

Prior to the certification, Air Liquide complied with all the requirements that started with the setting up of purification facilities in its main plant in Pasig City. There, the company built a new and modern 100 tons per day Air Separation Unit plant, producing nitrogen, oxygen and argon. Its location in Sandoval Avenue in Barrio Pinagbuhatan gave it a convenient access to C5 road, a major artery that connects various points of Metro Manila and outlying provinces where their clients are.

In addition to its existing facilities, Air Liquide has also put up a CO_2 purification and liquefaction plant. The maximum CO_2 production capability of the plant will be around 2 tons per hour or 48 tons per day. In addition, two dry ice manufacturing presses have been installed to produce dry ice blocks of various sizes and pellets. In the same site is a hydrogen production facility capable of producing high purity and ultra high purity gas with a capacity of 120 Nm^3/hr.

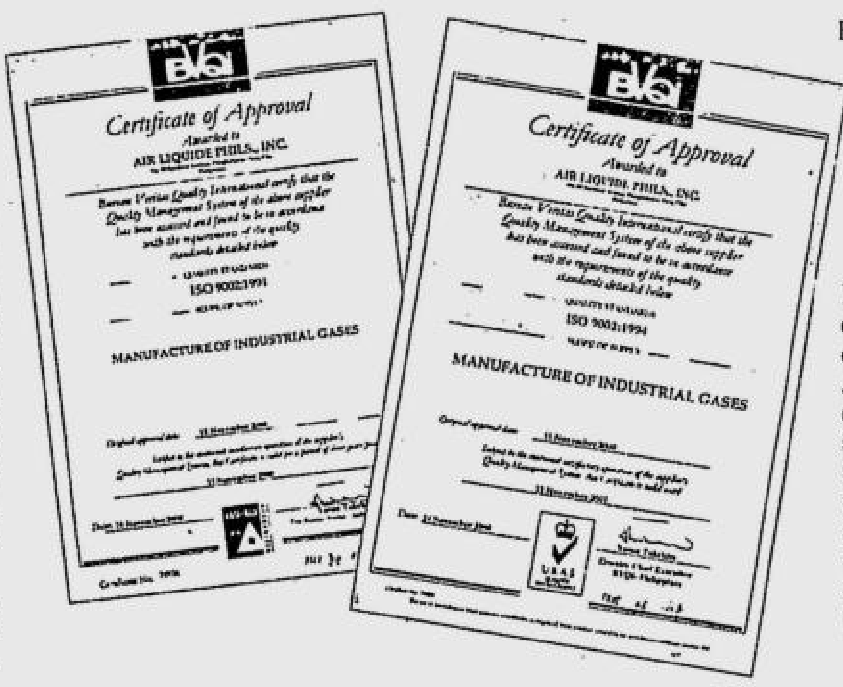
Then just recently, the company has inaugurated its dual power supply not only from its generation plant but also the Meralco network, water supply source and back-up facilities enabling Air Liquide Philippines to offer total reliability to its customers and unsurpassed independence that is difficult to equal for continuous operation and constant power supply.

Building infrastructures for client satisfaction

The company has completed laying down a nitrogen and hydrogen pipeline network in the FTI Complex in Taguig, Metro Manila and supplying four electronic companies for their gases requirements. In addition to its first nitrogen plant, Air Liquide Philippines has also installed a second nitrogen gas generator in the FTI Complex, to further assure a reliable gas supply to its growing customers inside the complex and nearby areas.

In Gateway Business Park, Cavite; First Philippine Industrial Park, Batangas; Lima Land, Batangas; and New Cebu Township One Business Park, Cebu, Air Liquide Philippines laid other pipeline networks together with large storage facilities and on-site gas generators for its electronic company clients located there.

"Among all the products Air Liquide offers to its customers is one new specific technology in on-site nitrogen generation called APSA which is cost-effective, requires a lower power consumption and its system allows remote control. Unique in the country, it suits perfectly to the needs of Filipinos and international companies working in the country for higher reliability and cost savings. We can also provide for all of our



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Aiming higher

(From page B4)

customers' requirements for industrial, high purity laboratory gases in cylinders. For that purpose, we have built a modern filling center at Pasig plant to fill all types of pure gases or gas mixtures in constant quality and precision," adds Mr. Lecouffe.

"Without our products, the world would be a different place—no more industries like electronics, petro-chemicals, manufacturing and hospitals or other healthcare establishments would not run efficiently," explains Mr. Lecouffe.

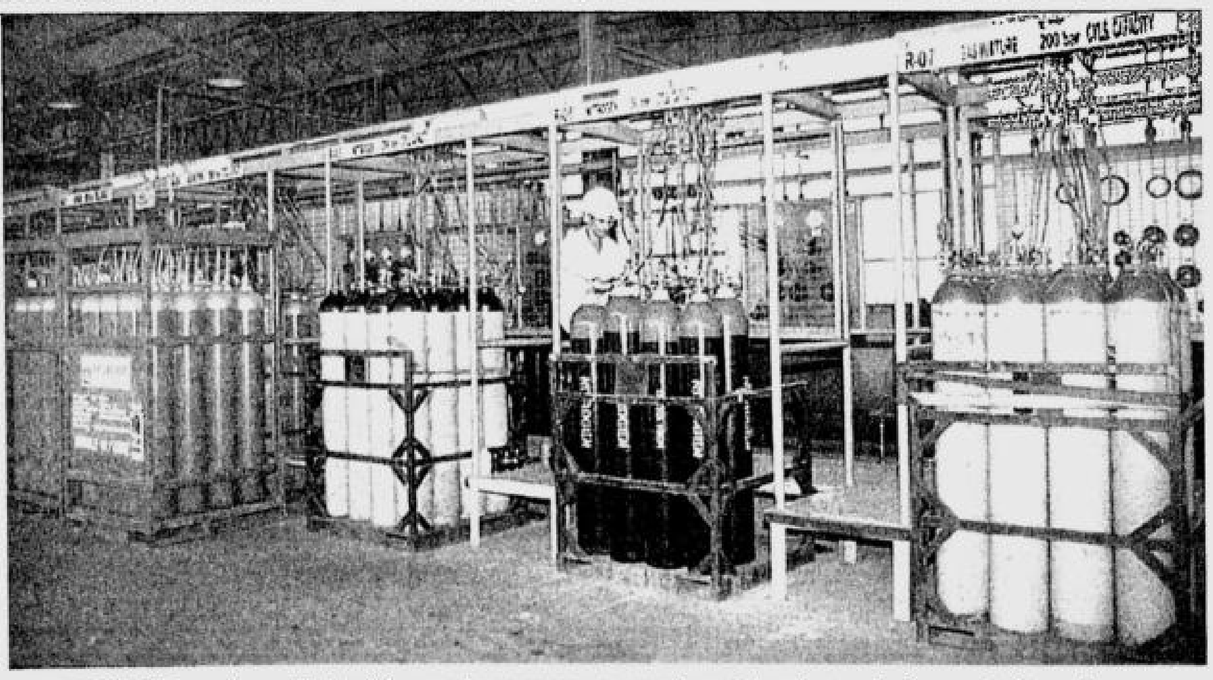
In just five years of successful market penetration, Air Liquide Philippines is looking forward in expanding their market base. As Mr. Lecouffe explained, "Considering how vital our products and services are, it is our responsibility to continue satisfying our customers through innovations and continuous upgrade. This ISO certification only strengthens our commitment to match and even exceed our customers' expectation and requirements and we won't stop here—we have only completed the first phase of our expansion which only means our customers are our top priority!"

> Air Liquide uses its in-depth knowledge of gas technology and its customer's processes to propose solutions that create added value

Offering more and more technology and services

Allowing its customers to concentrate on their core business is Air Liquide's objective. The company strives to offer its customers the most complete package of services and technologies to free them from everything having to do with gas and utilities management.

Service now includes installing the gas distribution equipment and software necessary to supply the point of use with the exact amount of gas needed, at the required purity. It also means such things as servicing equipment or providing customers with the information they need to optimize their production. Air Liquide often provides this service with a special team working round-the-clock in the customers' plant.



AIR LIQUIDE'S modern cylinder filling center ensures an ample and steady supply of gases to its customers.

Service is also important in the company's heathcare business. In hospitals, Air Liquide supplies gases right to the patient's bedside, monitors gas quality and supply, trains staff, and develops its range of hospital disinfection products and services. In the patient's home, Air Liquide handles all aspects of respiratory disorder treatment, such as installing equipment, managing medical records, providing advice and remote-monitoring.

A century of experience

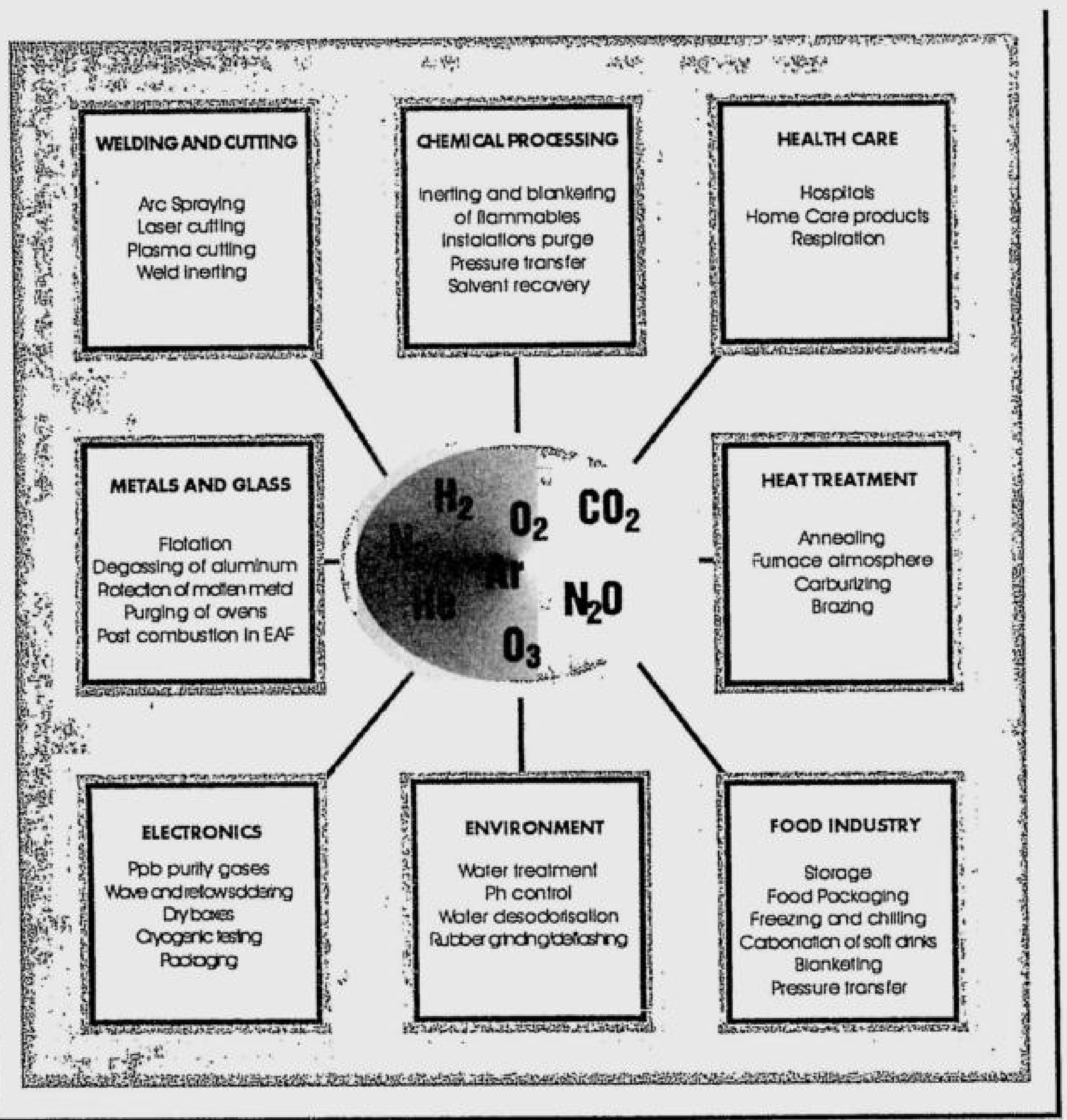
As the first company to invent and pioneered the separation of air through cryogenics, Air Liquide is the world's largest industrial gas company present in more then 60 countries with annual sales in excess of $6 billion. With 23 percent share of the global market, the company provides all types of industrial gases, like oxygen, nitrogen, argon, hydrogen, carbon dioxide to name a few.

Founded in 1902, the company is currently combining the resources and expertise of a global group with a very strong local presence, based on independent customer-focused teams.

By supplying oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and many other products and services to industries as varied as steel and oil refining, chemistry and glass, electronics and paper, metallurgy and food-processing, healthcare and aerospace, Air Liquide provides innovative solutions which improve the industrial performance of its customers while helping to protect the environment.

AIR LIQUIDE'S APSA technology allows for an on-site production of cryogenic grade nitrogen for flow rates from 100 to 1,200 Nm³/hour. The system is fully automatic and operates unattended around the clock.

Photos by ROMY HOMILLADA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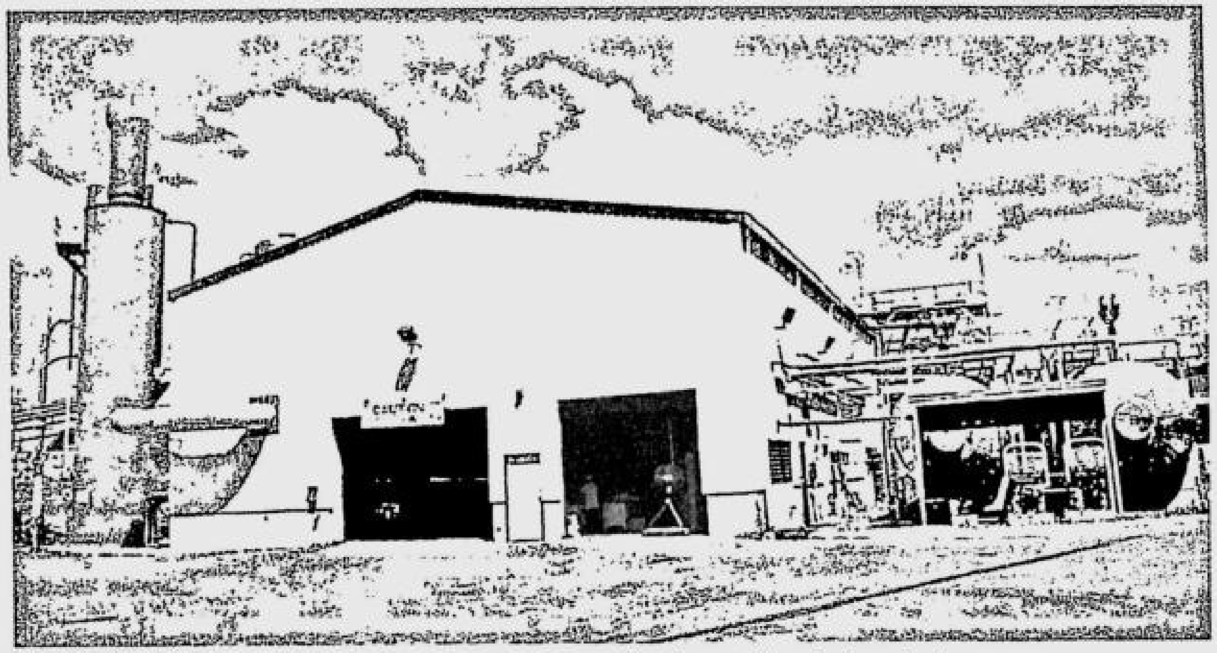
THE DIAGRAM above illustrates various applications for the gases manufactured by Air Liquide



THIS facility houses Air Liquide's 48 tons per day CO_2 purification and liquefaction plant.

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REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC, Editor

New IBM software efficiently addresses multicultural e-commerce

IBM recently announced a new e-commerce software that cuts through the comprehensive and costs of selling goods across countries and cultures.

The new software also includes features for mobile commerce, providing access to e-commerce sites via handheld devices.

Because global, multicultural e-commerce requires support for more than just various languages and currencies, WebSphere Commerce Suite Version 5.1 now supports functions such as region-specific sales tax and shipping rules, customized product catalogs and localized payment methods and pricing. Companies that operate in diverse countries can use the software to conduct business around the world more efficiently and provide better customer service and support – all from a single commerce site.

In addition, the new software allows for anytime, anywhere access to e-commerce sites with enhanced mobile computing features – including notification messages, automatic content selection and customized shopping flow – tailored to individual devices.

"The backdrop for commerce in Asia/Pacific is the diversity of languages, rules and regulations. In 2001, we believe that the e-commerce revenue will continue to grow rapidly and across US$ 18 billion in Asia Pacific, and mobile services will begin to make inroads with the introduction of GPRS (2.5G) networks in several countries. Thus, WebSphere Commerce Suite v5.1 is well positioned and timed to take advantage of these trends, and help IBM address the e-commerce market even more effectively in the region," said Himanshu Dayal, senior analyst, Software Research, International Data Corp., (IDC) Asia Pacific.

In 2000, WebSphere Commerce Suite posted more than 300 percent revenue growth, far outpacing the industry growth rate of 145 percent. With its new capabilities, WebSphere Commerce Suite provides a comprehensive array of feature and functionality necessary to meet the needs of the three major markets for e-commerce" business-to-business, business-to-consumer and e-marketplaces.

IDC estimates that 60 percent of business-to-business companies have taken steps to globalize their websites. IDC also predicts that these globalization efforts earn companies an average of 15 percent more foreign revenue than competitors that have not globalized.

"As local companies increasingly leverage the use of the Web as a medium of transacting business, the entry into e-commerce becomes imperative in the leap to global competitiveness," said Aileen Judan-Jiao, country manager for Software Solutions, IBM Philippines. "The size of your business doesn't matter – whether your are a dot.com, a very small business, a large brick-and-mortar company or a hosted service provider. WebSphere Commerce Suite provides a scalable, open-standard and flexible solution for all kinds of business to rapidly build, integrate, deploy and utilize Web applications for the customer's ease of use."

With its intuitive design, WebSphere Commerce Suite provides easy-to-use interface for business managers to create dynamic marketing campaigns, product promotions and recommendations, discounts and advertisements, all targeted to specific customers using powerful business rules technology. Combined with new out-of-the-box business intelligence function, WebSphere Commerce Suite offers a user-friendly interface to support highly customized marketing and merchandising techniques.

WebSphere Commerce Suite is based on open industry standards and features an enhanced Java programming model. It provides a flexible and powerful Web application development and management workbench for rapid and easy integration, deployment and usage.

Additional information about WebSphere Commerce Suite is available at www.ibm.com/software/websphere/commerce.

PANA AWARDS LOYAL EMPLOYEE

The Philippine Association of National Advertisers (PANA) officers award a plaque of recognition and a gold wristwatch to PANA accountant and office manager Reynaldo A. Jaucian for his 25 years of service/employment to the association (center). Present during the awarding ceremony are (from left) PANA executive director Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon, secretary Gigi B. Rodriguez of Citibank, president Angelica P. Suiza of Golden ABC, Inc. (Penshoppe), vice president Susie Achacoso-Cruz of Godiva, Inc., treasurer Cergen D. Go of Swedish Match Philippines and public relations officer Gina R. Virtuoso of WG&A (Superferry).

FLY HIGH

DHL Philippines Corporation, the local arm of the world's leading air express service, held a "DHL Clients' Day" for their loyal customers. Their slogan, "Flying High 2001," best describes what one may expect when teaming up with the company named "Best Express Service" for the past 14 years. The DHL Flying High 2001 management team is composed of (from left) Pip Villanueva, senior manager for services group; Rod V. Feliciano, chair; Gina Marquinez, global accounts manager; Joseph Lariosa, HR manager; Jose B. Feliciano, president; Aida Nisay, territorial sales manager; Cherry Pie Arganda, retail network sales manager; Brad Harris, Gateway manager; Joan Garcia, government accounts manager; Jean Abello, import express manager; Tony Aguas, senior manager for sales; and Benny Ricafort, director of PCCI.

FFI DONATES TO SM FOUNDATION

Family First Inc. (FFI) marketing manager Ricky Cleary (second from left) turns over toy donations to SM Foundation's project director Cristie Angeles (second from right). Looking on are (from left) FFI group sales manager Levi Lacdao, FFI national customer service and collections manager Ethel dela Cruz and executive assistant Tet Manares.

Cyberspace launches online shopping mall

PADALAREGALO.COM, Cyberspace Inc.'s own online shopping mall, will be inaugurated and formally launched today at Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. The event will run until Feb. 25, it was announced by Cyberspace president Julie Figueroa.

"With PadalREgalo.com, Filipinos overseas will enjoy the ease, convenience and speed of online shopping whether they are in the US, Canada, the Middle East, Hong Kong, Singapore or Japan. All they have to do is visit the PadalaRegalo.com website, choose the items they want to buy, pay with their credit cards and these will be delivered to designated recipients in the Philippines," Figueroa explained.

A wide array of products being offered by PadalaRegalo.com ranging from cakes and lechons to flowers, cellular phones, books, catering services, toys and more. Each vendor/merchant is entitled to a free package consisting of 10 web pages and web hosting services for a minimum of one year. Additional merchants or vendors wishing to set up their electronic storefront in PadalaRegalo.com are still welcome.

Unlike the traditional balikbayan box which takes approximately two weeks to a month to be delivered, PadalaRegalo.com has a shorter delivery period and lower shipping charges. It is also considerably shortens the return and exchange of defective or damaged items.

Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover credit cards are accepted.

PadalaRegalo.com uses Verisign for its Secure Server ID and the payment gateway of a US-based service provider.

Interested companies which want to avail of Cyberspace's customized e-commerce platform and solutions, as well as vendors or merchants wishing to set up their electronic storefronts can visit Booth 15 at the E-Commerce 2001 Expo. Further inquiries can be addressed to Cyberspace, Inc., P/H Padilla Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City or call 637-2775 to 78, fax at 637-2776 or email at sales@csi.com.ph.

CO-BRANDING AGREEMENT

Inq7 Interactive, the joint venture between Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network, recently entered into a co-branding agreement with Similan.com which runs and operates the SurfingBananas auction sites across Asia. Similan will power the auctions feature on inq7.net, which will be formally launched on Feb. 27 at the GMA Network Center. In photo are Milet Bolaños, Similan country manager and Dennis Valdes, Inq7 president.

OFF TO AUSTRALIA

Brent School Baguio student exchangees receive their airline tickets from corporate sponsor Qantas Airlines. From left: Angela Nevada, Brent faculty and parent who chaperoned the students; Honeybee Hubahib, Qantas Airlines country manager; Luis Padilla, Dionne Soriano and Ria Nevada. The students left for Shepparton in Australia on Feb. 9.

Center for Pop opens Lagro branch

THE CENTER for Pop Music Philippines, the country's first training school in pop singing, opened its 8th branch in Lagro yesterday with Speaker Sonny Belmonte of the House of Representatives and recording artist Nerissa as special guests. The new branch is located at the second floor, Christopher Plaza, Km. 21, Quirino Highway, Lagro, Novaliches, QC.

ALBARRACIN

Butch Albarracin, founder and president of the Center for Pop Music Philippines, said that the Lagro branch will make his training program accessible to the residents of Lagro, Novaliches, Fairview, Commonwealth Avenue and some parts of Bulacan.

Among the products of the Center for Pop Music Philippines are Roselle Nava, Dessa, Geneva Cruz, Cooky Chua, Nerissa, Roxanne Barcelo and Gian Moreno. The latest talent of the Center is Teresa Moreno of Ivory Records with current single "Kamusta Ka."

Tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. the Center for Pop Music Philippines will present a free concert titled "Starborne" at the parking lot of Christopher Plaza.

Aside from the Lagro Branch, the Center for Pop Music Philippines branches are located in Makati, Cubao, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Roces Ave. (QC), Marikina and Cebu City with extension classes in 20 schools in Metro Manila.

For details, call Lagro branch manager Nelda Carreon at 419-7015 or the head office at 727-5293 or 414-7310.

ALL SET FOR GOMA CUP

Athlete and youth advocate Richard Gomez (extreme right) spearheads the much-awaited 11th Smart Zed Goma Cup which kicked off yesterday at Fairways and Bluewaters in Boracay. This year's tournament will see celebrity golf enthusiasts match head to head against the country's top 40 pro golf players for the P1 million prize money. Organized by Hartebeest Entertainment, Inc., the 11th Smart Zed Goma Cup is recognized as the country's longest and most successful golf tournament to date. Also in photo are (from left) G.P. Barnes Group of Companies chair Gregory P. Barnes and Fairways and Bluewaters chair Toti Cariño.

STREET PARTY IN MALATE

Citylite 88.3 held "Citylite Live... The Street Party" right across Havana Café along Remedios Circle in Malate recently. Photo shows members of the band Groove performing at the gig. The event was presented by Citylite 88.3 and LJC and sponsored by Clusivol, San Miguel night Brews, Petron Blaze, Knorr Hotpot, Bayfresh, Smart and Bacardi.

BITS

Clips

Valentine treat from Characters Unlimited

CHARACTERS Unlimited, one of the country's leading one-stop shop for cartoon characters and home of the popular and well-loved cartoon characters like Robby Rabbit, Snoopy, Barbie, Garfield, the Sesame Street Gang and many others, introduces "Double Treat for Valentines's'' promo. For every purchase of any of these character items worth P300, you can get a cool and hip Robby Rabbit canister or Barbie tin case. Promo runs until Feb. 28, 2001.

CDO-FOODSPHERE CITED BY ROBINSON'S GROUP

CDO-Foodsphere Inc., manufacturer of CDO brand of processed foods, was cited for the second time by Robinson's Supermarket Corp., as an outstanding supplier during the 32nd anniversary of the giant retail chain. Shown at the awarding ceremony are (from left) Jerome D. Ong, CDO senior vice president and general manager; Antonio Locsin, CDO area sales manager for supermarkets; Ronie T. Ong, RSC general manager; James L. Go, JG Summit Hodlings president; and Ed R. Reataza, CDO AVP and national sales manager.

Thai cooking at the Julius Maggi Kitchen

TODAY, and on Feb. 24, 27, March 1 and 3, Nestlé Consumer Services presents "The Mystery of Thai Cuisine" at the Julius Maggi Kitchen, from 2 to 4 p.m. Following the cooking demonstration is a lifestyle enhancement lecture on the essentials of keeping your skin healthy, courtesy of Cetaphil. The Julius Maggi Kitchen is a showcase for culinary lessons and a venue for a whole range of lifestyle improvement sessions – one of Nestlé's ways to help consumers enjoy its product through the different stages of their lives. The Julius Maggi Kitchen is located at the ground floor of the Nescafé Center at 31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City. Interested parties call 898-0061.

EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The BS Entrepreneurship program of Miriam College entered into an articulation agreement with Centenary College, New Jersey, USA. Both parties agreed to develop an exchange program involving faculty, faculty students and administrators to promote globalization in the fields of entrepreneurship, international business, computer graphic designs and marketing network. Present during the signing ceremony are (from left) Dr. Glenda Fortez, Miriam College associate dean for academic affairs; Roger Bruan, international executive director of Centenary College; Dr. Rosario O. Lapuz, Miriam College vice president for academic affairs and Antonio Lopez, chair of the entrepreneurship department of Miriam College.

IFC forcing All Asia's closure

By Clarissa S. Batino

ALL Asia Capital & Trust Corp. yesterday accused the World Bank's investment arm of blocking its capital infusion plan and forcing it to shut down and liquidate its assets.

All Asia vice chair Eusebio Tanco said in a news conference that All Asia's local shareholders were prepared to infuse about P500 million to rehabilitate the company.

But the plan was being snagged by a no-dilution clause signed by All Asia with the World Bank's International Finance Corp. last year in relation to assets pledged by the company to cover for a $17-million long-term loan, he said.

"Instead of helping out, they are impeding the rehab plan. If they don't want to pump in money, its okay, but they should not block our efforts to save the company," Tanco said.

All Asia chair Ramon Abaya said IFC's only concern was to preserve its interest as a creditor and not the recovery of the company.

Apart from a $17-million loan, IFC also has a $4-million equity equivalent to 7 percent of All Asia.

Tanco said when All Asia experienced liquidity problems in mid-2000, IFC wanted to bolt out of the company. To prevent its shareholders from bailing out, All Asia agreed to pledge almost 80 percent of its existing assets in five sectors. The pledge was covered by a clause that assured IFC its stake would not be dilute.

Nicasio Alcantara, chair of All Asia's executive committee, said a capital infusion was the only solution to All Asia's problems, but IFC was blocking this recourse.

"Re-capitalization is the key component of the rehab and, if they are blocking us, then the only conclusion is they want to force us into liquidation," Tanco said.

The three All Asia officials said that should the company shut down, IFC might be left with nothing to collect and the value of the assets pledged to it might even be worthless.

COUNTRY SHARES
As of February 22, 2001

	BUYING	SELLING
Alabang Country Club	1,700,000	
Capitol Hills Golf Club		115,000
Eagle Ridge A	400,000	
Forest Hills A		290,000
Makati Sports A/B*	400,000	500,000*
Manila Polo	3,000,000	
Manila Southwoods A/B*	850,000/900,000*	
Orchard "A"		330,000
Quezon City Sports	230,000	
Riviera		280,000
Tagaytay Country Club/Golf*		530,000/1,250,000*
Tagaytay Midlands		900,000
Valley Golf	300,000	
WackWack	8,000,000	

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PSE cautions against defaming BW suspects

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange yesterday expressed concern that the probe on BW Resources Corp., recently renamed Fairmont Holdings Inc., was throwing dirt at its members without due process.

In a news statement, PSE president Ramon Garcia said he welcomed the Securities and Exchange Commission's move to complete its investigation of BW Resources and file a report with the Department of Justice.

But he warned against casting doubt on the PSE's integrity by maligning some of its members.

"It is about time that the BW case is put to rest. The truth must come out. However, in pursuit of ferreting out the truth, the rights of all parties and affected brokers to due process must be respected," he said.

Garcia was reacting to reports that named certain brokers as parties to the BW Resources case.

"Our concern is the impact on the integrity of the stock exchange if brokers are indiscriminately and unjustly dragged into the case without due process," he said.

The SEC is endorsing to the justice department the indictment of 30 other individuals for their alleged involvement in a stock fraud and price manipulation scam involving BW Resources.

Among those cited in the report were PCCI Securities Corp. president Francisco Liboro and eight stockbrokerages for 79 counts of wash sales and several counts of matched orders and cross trades. BW Resources majority shareholder Dante Tan and some of his associates and brokers implicated in previous SEC investigations were also cited.

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Exportbank told to return to mandate

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered the Export and Industry Bank Inc. to go back to its original mandate of operating as a bona fide export-import bank to serve the financing requirements of exporters.

In a speech before members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the President said there was no need to create another eximbank since Exportbank, which got its banking license from a law—the Export Development Act—and not from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was established to serve the financing needs of exporters.

"I move that the implementation of the mandate of the bank be thrown back to the private sector who are the owners of the bank," said Ms Macapagal in response to businessmen's clamor for the creation of another eximbank.

Ms Macapagal authored the Export Development Act when she was still a senator.

Exportbank chair Sergio Ortiz-Luis said the bank was unable to operate as a full-service eximbank because of the lack of government financing.

"Eximbanks, such as those from Japan and the US, require billions of funds in order to offer wholesale banking and loan guarantees. Only the government can afford to finance an eximbank because we the private sector have only so much funds available for such undertaking," Ortiz-Luis said.

SC body drafts rules to settle corporate tiffs

By Elena R. Torrijos

A SUPREME Court-assigned committee has finished drafting a set of rules to settle intra-corporate disputes.

Once approved by the high court, these rules will guide regular courts in deciding cases involving distressed companies.

Under the Securities Regulation Code that took effect in August last year, all intra-corporate cases were transferred from the Securities and Exchange Commission to regular courts.

The Supreme Court formed a committee to come up with a set of rules to help regional and municipal trial court judges settle intra-corporate disputes. Justices Reynato Puno and Jose Vitug chaired the committee. Its members were former SEC officials Daisy Besa-de Asis, Marcial Balgos, Francisco Lim, Florencio Orendain and Amado Santiago Jr.

The committee has come up with rules that require the appointment of a management committee which will supervise distressed companies.

It invoked Presidential Decree 902-A, which provided the creation of a management committee "over a corporation, partnership or association when there is imminent danger of dissipation, loss, wastage or destruction of assets or other properties or paralyzation of business operations which may be prejudicial to the interest of minority stockholders, parties litigants or the general public."

SCCP submits special collateral fund proposals

THE SECURITIES Clearing Corp. of the Philippines has submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission a proposed credit ring agreement and procedures for a special collateral fund.

The SEC earlier approved the SCCP's request that all its members whose net negative exposures amounted to P1 million or below be exempted from a required daily collateral collection under the mark-to-market collateral deposit system.

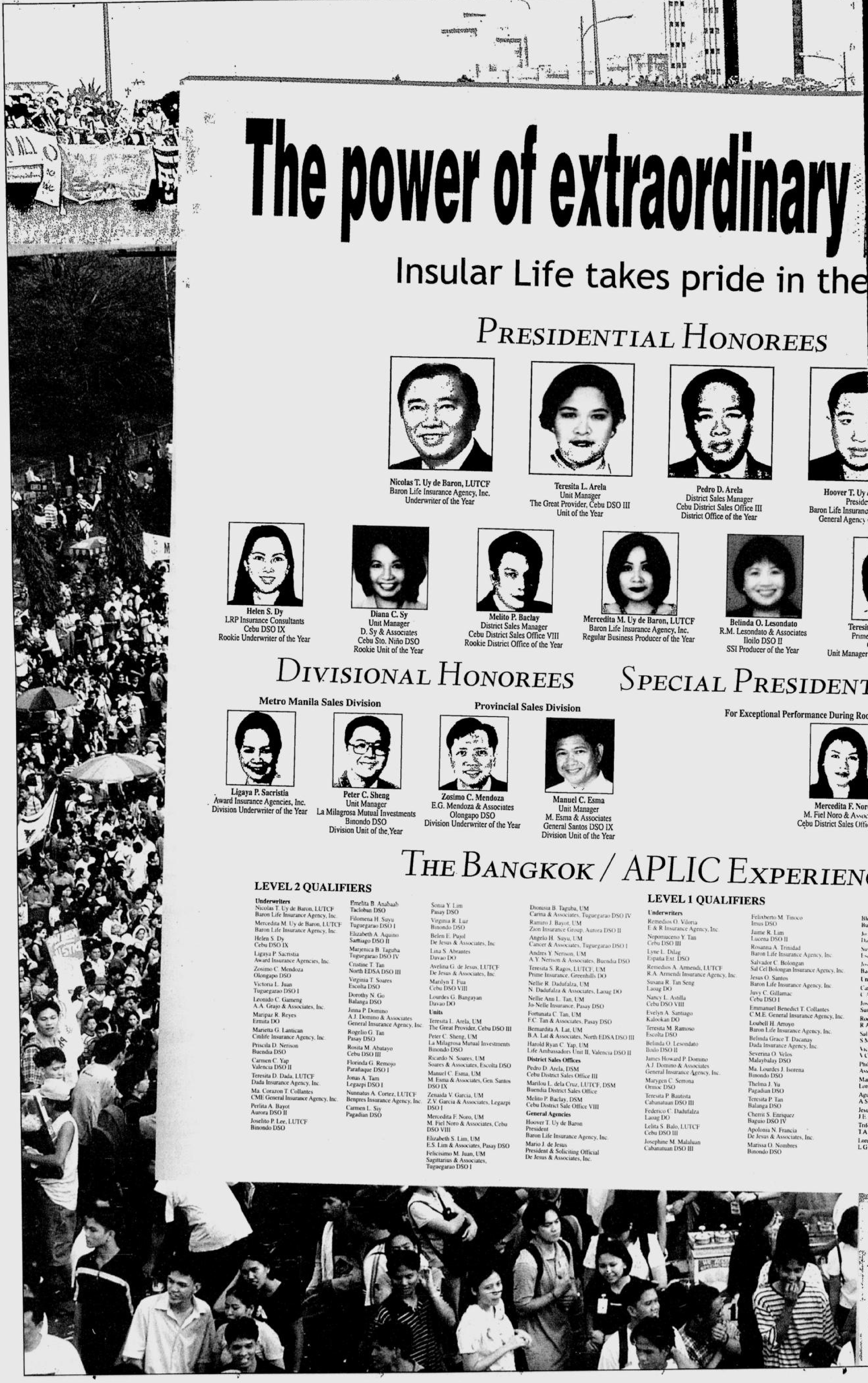
The SCCP is the clearing arm of the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The exemption, however, was subject to the condition that the SCCP, via a one-time contribution by its members or by the PSE on behalf of its brokers, add P10 million to the Clearing and Trade Guarantee Fund to cover the aggregate net negative exposures of members whose computed individual exposure were below P1 million.

As another condition, the SEC also required the SCCP to organize a credit ring agreement.

Under the credit ring agreement that the SCCP has proposed, members of the SCCP and the PSE will contribute pro-rata the deficit between the total net negative exposure of failing brokers and the amount of P10 million to the Clearing and Trade Guarantee Fund. This should cover the aggregate net negative exposures of all SCCP members with individual exposures equivalent to P1 million or below.

The SCCP also proposed to review the fund quarterly to determine if it could cover the highest daily aggregate net negative exposures by all its members with individual exposures equivalent to or below P1 million.



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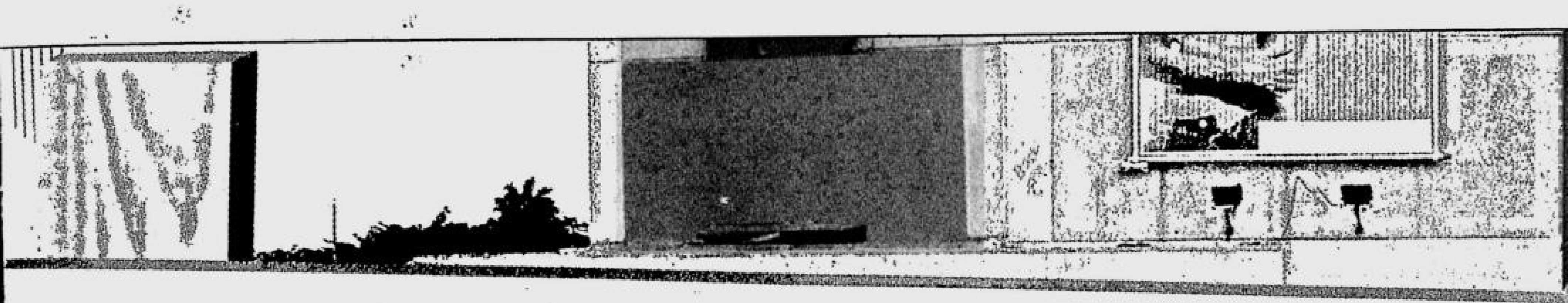

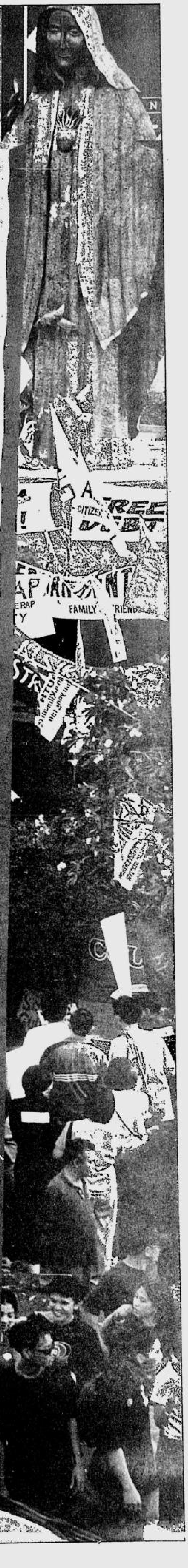

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MESSAGES

We mark a special occasion today as we honor the distinguished members of our agency force for their outstanding sales achievements in 2000.

Their performance last year is an eloquent testimony of their commitment to the lofty standards of quality sales and service excellence. It speaks volumes of their adherence to our corporate mission of securing the future of countless Filipinos through our products and services. Despite the difficulties experienced in the market in 2000, they valiantly sustained their efforts to overcome the obstacles, thus proving themselves worthy to be called true sales professionals.

It is with great pleasure therefore that I extend my warmest congratulations and highest commendation to our 2000 honorees and National Sales Drive convention qualifiers, for a job well done.

May you continue to uphold the ideals of your noble profession, and achieve greater successes in the future.

VICENTE R. AYLLÓN
Chairman of the Board & President

Congratulations to our 2000 Presidential Honorees, Divisional Honorees, and qualifiers to the 2000 National Sales Drive's Bangkok/APLIC Experience.

The National Sales Drive Testimonial Dinner and Awards Night is one of our company's most-anticipated annual events as it provides us the opportunity to honor our distinguished sales producers during the preceding year. It is the time when we formally give them due recognition for their steadfast adherence to the ideals of career excellence and dedication to duty.

Despite the difficulties in 2000, they rose above the challenges and emerged victorious in their quest for sales distinction. For this, they have earned a highly esteemed place in the illustrious history of our great company.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MUNOZ BRIONES PAWNSHOP
AUCTION SALE
• MARCH 05, 2001 •
All unredeemed articles
up to Oct. 1-30, 2000
In the following branches:
354 Roosevelt Ave QC 9AM
Pinatubo St. Mand 10AM
Producers Mkt Mand 11AM
109 Dela Rosa St Mkt 1PM
108 Legaspi St Mktl 2PM
V. ZAMORA Lic. Auctioneer

NUESTRA-DAMUS-NAV PAWNSHOP Makati City AUCTION SALE on March 7, 2001, all unredeemed pledges during the month of October 1-31, 2000. Nuestra Br. II-Pio del Pilar-9:30am; Nuestra Br. I-Evangelista-10:30am;Damus Br. I-Pasong Tamo-12:30pm;Nuestra-Main (JP)-1:00pm; NAV Pawnshop-2:00pm; Nuestra Br. IX Zapote-3:00pm. Sons of J. Lanuza-Auctioneer.

NUESTRA-DIAJADE PAWNSHOP LAS PINAS METRO MANILA Will have its Auction Sale on March 6, 2001. All unredeemed pledges during the month of October 1-31, 2000. Diajade Main-9:30am; Diajade Br. II-10:30am; Nuestra Br. III-11:30am; Diajade Br. I-1:00pm; Nuestra Almanza-2:00pm. Sons of J. Lanuza-Auctioneer

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given of the loss of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company Stock Certificates Nos.: 129684, 36364, 116975, MFU33774, 110898, 98344, 98343, 92460, MF092459, MF076763, MF067706, MF057539, MF048469, MF041546, MF041547, MFU13463, MF026335, MF026336, MF018777, MF0012696, MF09789, MFU4441, MF04898, MFU3295, 129685 under the name of Harry G. Fullen and/ or Rosa R. Fullen. If no one contest after one (1) year new certificates will be issued.
(PDI-Feb. 8, 15 and 22, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Col. Felix L. Cabreros P.A. has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc.# 64, Page# 14, Book# 01, Series of 2001 Before Notary Public Policarpio R. Zacarias of Makati City.
(Feb. 15, 22, & Mar. 1, 2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO BLESSED MOTHER (NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen.

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)

THANK YOU SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

THANK YOU HOLY SPIRIT

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Almeda Bldg. Roxas Blvd. cor. San Luis St.,
Pasay City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 551-3443; 891-6423

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL FOR THE OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE OF MACTAN ECONOMIC ZONE (MEZ) ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites all qualified applicants to pre-qualify and submit technical and price proposals for the Operation and Maintenance Services requirements of the electrical distribution system of Mactan Economic Zone located in Mactan Island, Cebu.

Pre-qualification documents are available for issuance to prospective applicants at the following address:

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
BAC - Infrastructure
3rd Floor, Almeda Bldg., Roxas Blvd. cor. San Luis St.,
Pasay City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 551-3443; 891-6423

upon presentation of original or certified true copy of SEC Registration and/or DTI Registration. Documents may be obtained upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 up to 23 February 2001.

Four (4) copies of the duly accomplished pre-qualification statement & bid proposal together with all other requirements shall be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 5:00 p.m. of **05 March 2001.**

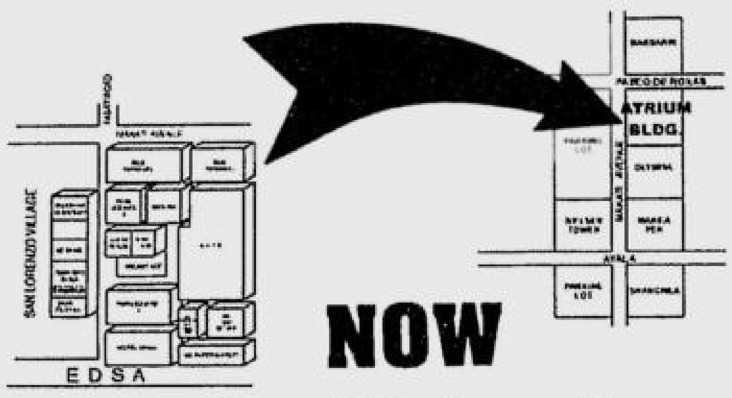
PEZA reserves the right to reject any application or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids, and will entertain only such bid/s established to be the most advantageous to PEZA.

Applicants will be advised in due course, of the results of their applications.

CHAIRMAN
BAC-Infrastructure

(PDI - Feb 9 16 & 22 2001)

Inquirer's Makati Branch



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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

NOTICE OF BIDDING

In compliance with Presidential authority for the importation of rice, the National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be holding a pre-bidding and bidding conference among NFA accredited suppliers (government and private) on **March 06, 2001** and **March 8, 2001**, respectively at 2:00 PM at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez, Sr. Ave., Quezon City for the supply of a portion thereof up to ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND (100,000) metric tons, 10% MOLSO, Long Grain White Rice 15% brokens and 25% brokens, packed in 50 kg net capacity, polypropylene bag, source from Vietnam, China and Thailand with shipment period not later than **April 15, 2001.** Detailed quality specifications shall be included in the bidding terms and conditions.

Price offers must be quoted in US$/MT, C&F, Free Out basis, 1 SP, 1-2 SB, basis at sight L/C and 180 days usance L/C. Maximum volume to be offered must be 50,000 MT and minimum of 25,000 MT, 10% MOLSO.

Sealed offers must be submitted between 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM on the bidding date accompanied by a bid bond equivalent to 10% of total offer in the form of Cashier's, Manager's check, bank or demand draft in US$ which must be drawn from a reputable Metro Manila bank or 100% stand-by irrevocable L/C valid for 120 days.

Opening of bids will start exactly at 2:00 PM.

Interested applicants for accreditation shall have until **March 05, 2001** to submit requirements for accreditation which may be secured from DMO-FOD, 5th Floor. Further, NFA accredited suppliers must submit documents to update records not later than 1700 HRS, **March 05, 2001.** Results of accreditation will be announced during the pre-bidding proper.

The bidding terms and conditions shall be available at the Foreign Operations Division - Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor starting **27 February 2001** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formalities or defects found therein and may accept bid/s most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN**
Administrator

(PDI--Feb. 22, 23 & 24, 2001)

FREE SEMINAR ON U.S. JOBS

Come to a FREE SEMINAR on jobs for nurses in the United States. This is only for CGFNS passers. It will be held at the Crispina Building, 1589 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 27, 2001. Register now! Call Leah at 0917-475-7071.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective **February 1, 2001 issue.**

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

INVITATION TO AUCTION

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it shall be conducting a sealed auction on **02 March 2001** at 2:00 PM at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, 101 Matimyas Building, E.Rodriguez, Sr., Avenue, Quezon City for the allocation of quotas to NFA licensed grains importers and wholesalers/retailers covering the initial importation of 7,500 MT of Premium, Fancy and Glutinous rice.

Interested auctioner/s should be able to comply with the following which shall be submitted to DMO-FOD, 5th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E.Rodriguez, Sr., Avenue, Quezon City not later than **28 February 2001.**

a. A duly notarized authorization from the owner, chairman, partner or president of the sole proprietorship, partnership, company, corporation or cooperative certifying that:
  a.1 He/She is presently connected with the foregoing entity either as owner, official, employee or present stockholder/shareholder;
  a.2 He/She is authorized to represent the entity to the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities pertinent therein.

b. Updated/valid NFA license as importer and wholesaler/retailer. It is understood that the winning auctioner/s shall comply with other NFA rules and regulations on NFA licensing as deemed appropriate.

The 7,500 MT shall be auctioned at a indicative equalization fee bid of PHP 3,240.00 per MT. Maximum quantity to be offered per importer is 1,000 MT.

All interested auctioners shall be subjected to payment/posting of bid bond equivalent to 10% of total bid price in the form of cash cashier's check or Manager's check.

The pre-auction conference will be held on **28 February 2001** at 2:00 PM at the NFA Boardroom.

Interested auctioners may secure the Guidelines in the Importation of Premium, Fancy and Glutinous Rice by the Private Sector starting **22 February 2001** (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) from DMO-FOD, 5th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E.Rodriguez, Sr., Avenue, Quezon City.

Winning auctioners shall be issued a Permit to Import Rice after payment of the required Equalization Fee. It is understood that the tariff/duty of 50% shall be paid by the importer.

Auction documents will be available on **28 February 2001** after the pre-auction conference upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP 2,000.00.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all, to waive any informality thereof and to accept only such bid/s as are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN**
Administrator

(PDI -- Feb 22, 23 & 24, 2001)

PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
Building 255, SBMA Centre, Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone,
Olongapo City, Philippines 2222
sbma Tel. Nos 252-4214 · 4124-4281 Fax No (63-47) 252-4284

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID FOR THE SALE OF ASSORTED CUT LOGS "AS IS, WHERE IS"

	ITEM DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	SCHEDULE OF BIDDING
I	Assorted cut log of different sizes and kind Stockpiled/located at Tipo TLS, Project Site, SBMA on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis.	March 14, 2001, 2:00 PM (Wednesday)

II. Only accredited lumber trader and sawmill operators are invited to the bidding and are requested to submit the following Pre-qualification documents at the Procurement and Property Management Department (PPMD), Room 201, 2nd Floor, Bldg. 255, SBMA at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.
  1. Certificate of Accreditation from Trade and Tourism Group or PPMD, SBMA.
  2. Latest Income Tax Return (ITR) of the bidder (1999) or copies of Audited Financial Statement of the Company and Certification of Cash Deposit by a reputable bank.

III. Deadline for submission of Pre-qualification Papers is on **February 28, 2001, Wednesday** (5:00 pm).

IV. Pre-Bid Conference and Issuance of Forms (P250 00 per set) will be on **March 7, 2001,** Wednesday (3:00 PM).

V. Bid Bond, in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price in favor of SBMA, is required.

VI. Sealed Bid in prescribed form shall be received until 2:00 PM on **March 14, 2001** at the Procurement and Property Management Department (PPMD), Room 201, 2nd Floor, Bldg. 255, SBMA at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

VII. For other information, inquiries and/or request for inspection, call Tel No. (047) 252-4214/ 4424/4501 (c/o Danny Sanchez).

VIII SBMA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality found therein or to reject/accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to SBMA.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO A. INOCENTES**
DA for Admin
Chairman, Disposal, Bids & Awards Committee, SBMA

(PDI--Feb. 21, 22 & 23, 2001)

People, Events & Products

REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC, Editor

NGOs promote spirit of volunteerism

IN CELEBRATION of the International Volunteer Year, four non-profit organization, namely, the Associate Missionaries of the Assumption (AMA) – Philippines, Jesuit Volunteer Philippines (JVP) Foundation, LRP Foundation and Venture for Fund Raising are launching a year-long celebration that will promote volunteerism for worthy causes.

The four organizations are launching the celebration with a special screening of the movie "Pay It Forward." The movie tells of the story of a young boy who is challenged by his teacher to change the life of three individuals through random acts of kindness.

AMA Phils. and JVP both recruit young professionals who commit one or two years of their life as missionaries to far-flung areas. There they serve as teachers, counselors, community organizers and youth formators. Both organizations serve a total of 25 areas from all over the country. The mission areas include farming, fishing and tribal communities.

Venture for Fund Raising is a non-profit group that trains other non-government organizations in the area of financial sustainability. Their work includes consulting and research as well. Organizations will soon be launching their book titled "Investing in Ourselves: Giving and Fund Raising in the Philippines." The publication provides NGOs and fund-raising practitioners with a deeper knowledge on the individual gift-giving market as well as fund-raising principles and strategies employed in the country.

LRP Foundation assists various non-profits involved in delivering education and health services to disadvantaged communities. Through grants and donations, LRP supports the following: the Sisters of Mary, who administer the Boystown and Girlstown Schools, the Pediatric Unit of Ospital ng Makati, the Mother Rosa Memorial Foundation which provides education and vocational training for young school children and adults. The school is situated in a farming community in San Simon, Pampanga.

An exhibit that highlights the selfless acts of volunteers will be staged for the month of March. Venues will be at the Louie's Cinema, Assumption College, Ateneo de Manila and the University of the Philippines. from April 2001 to March 2001, the exhibit will be staged at various venues throughout the country.

Corporate sponsors for the year-long campaign include: Nestea, webserveasia.com, Headstrong Corp., Edsa mail.

Sidelight: Take advantage of the ongoing "Freebies @ the Movies" promotion sponsored by Automatic Center for all Louie's THX Cinema members until Feb. 28, 2001. Every moviegoer of Louie's is given a P100 discount coupon which can be used upon minimum purchase worth P5,000 at Automatic Centre-Greenbelt or Glorietta 4 branch. Discount Coupon is redeemable until April 30, 2001. Get a coupon and shop at Automatic Centre today.

NEW HOME FOR HSBC
The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) is moving its Ortigas branch as well as its other departments to The Discovery Centre at 25 ADB Avenue in Ortigas Center. The Discovery Center is one of the newest business and residential addresses in Ortigas Center, the country's fastest-growing business and financial district. It is owned and developed by Oakridge Properties, Inc. Shown after the contract signing are Ruben Tiu, Oakridge Properties Inc. president and Paul Lawrence, HSBC chief executive officer. Looking on are Discovery Suites general manager Jack Tuason and Oakridge Properties, Inc. marketing director Gigi Singson.

MSE DONATES SHOES TO SCHOOL
Marikina Shoe Exchange (MSE) recently donated shoes to the pupils of Fugoso Elementary School in Boystown Complex, Marikina City. MSE is a footwear wholesaler based in the Prime Block, Tutuban Center Manila, with branches in Dagupan City and Lipa City. Shown are representatives of MSE distributing the shoes with the assistance of the Fugoso Elementary School faculty.

INQUIRER TRiVIA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Jewelry allergy

Q. What's the remedy when wearing jewelry causes allergy?

A. Experts say that if you have a reaction to a ring, earrings, or metal eyeglass frames, clean them with rubbing alcohol, then use clear nail polish to coat the part that touches the skin. Reapply the polish when it wears off. Another way to lessen irritation is to apply over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream before you put on the jewelry or frames.

For the Record. It is now believed that the world's oceans may contain as much as 10,000 million tons of gold. Untapped wealth, indeed, but it is dissolved in an immeasurably greater volume of water that extracting a commercial volume of gold from the sea would be a foolish and costly exercise.

Ooops! For seven years, from 1896 to 1903, a priceless gold tiara was the toast of the Louvre, the famous art museum in Paris. It has been found in the southern Russian town of Olbia, and was inscribed in Greek: "The Senate and People of Olbia to the Great Invisible Saitaphernes. For an object believed to be 2,200 years old, the tiara—which the Louvre bought for almost $2 million—was in a remarkable state of preservation. And it would still have been on display today had not a French artist named Elina falsely claimed to have created it. The real creator was Israel Rouchomovsky, a Russian goldsmith commissioned by a Rumanian art dealer named Schapschelle Hochmann. He paid Rouchomovsky the equivalent of $7,000, and then battered the tiara to simulate age. A friend of Rouchomovsky, living in Paris, who had seen him fashioning the tiara, would not allow an unknown artist like Elina to steal the glory, so he exposed the fraud. The ancient gold tiara was actually only one year old when it first went on display.

WORD WATCH

Palso : from the Spanish *falso*, 'false, counterfeit.'

PDI -- February 22, 2001

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OUR DEARLY BELOVED

RAFAEL G. SOLIS

of Medicion, Imus, Cavite

has peacefully joined his Creator on February 16, 2001 at the age of 63.

His bereaved wife **Nellie**; children **Arman** and **Anadel**, **Tito** and **Chic**, **Joey** and **Violy**, **Liza**, **Tess** and **Ed**, **Jofer**, **Mert** and **Jasmin**, **Ranel** and **Andrew**; brother **Ernesto**; sisters **Dra. Ester**, **Nenic** and **Dra. Nellie Solis Orlino**; in-laws; **Enriqueta** and **Dr. Marcos Orlino**; grandchildren, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Angelus Chapel, Toclong I, Imus, Cavite.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 25, 2001 at Imus Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at Angelus Chapel.

OUR DEARLY BELOVED

QUERUBIN A. RELOVA

(Former Mayor of Pila, Laguna)

Has peacefully joined our Lord On February 21, 2001 at the age of 69.

His bereaved wife **Grace**; children **Jojo** and **Jenny**, **Abey** and **Doy Santos**, and **Bin** and **Karina**; brothers, sisters and their spouses **Jessie** and **Tony Goco**, **Aline** and **Ramon Canon**, **Franchot** (†) and **Girlly**, and **Don** and **Thelma**; in-laws and their spouses **Sunny** and **Pepe Silva**, **Dra. Nelly Rivera**, **Hector** (†) and **Nenita**, and **Alice** and **Marianing Marañon**; grandchildren, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Wake services will be at the following:

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, New Manila, Quezon City until 12 noon on Friday, February 23

And

No. 17 Rizal Street, Pila, Laguna until Sunday, February 25.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 25 after the 10 a.m. Holy Mass at the Pila Municipal Cemetery.

Happy are those who have died in the Lord;
let them rest from their labors for their good deeds go with them.
Revelations 14:13

MARIA MIRANDA PARUNGAO

(widow of BUENAVENTURA PARUNGAO)
Gapan, Nueva Ecija and Baguio City

was lovingly called by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to dwell in the House of the Father forever last February 17, 2001; She was 80 years old.

She will be most missed by her loving children, grandchildren and great grandchildren; **Jean** and **Billy** (†) **Guevarra** with **Tinggay**, **Che**, **Kaye** and **Nicky**; **Bessie** and **Charles Albano** with **Lawrence** and children **Arianna**, **Alitha** and **Seth** and **Caroline** and child **Dawn**; **Benny** and **Estela** (†) with **Vicky** and **Ding** and child **Dot-Dot**; **Danny** and **Winnie** with **Gippy** and **Maria Elsa**; **Josie** with **Claire**, **Pamela** and **Gillian Reclosado**; **Marie** (†) and **Henry Narciso** with **Paolo**, **Carlo**, **Macky** and **Mara**; **Lourdes** and **Chris Datu** with **Diane**, **Buencarlo** and **Marinelle**; and **Lita** and **Billy Caisip** with **John-John**, **Robert** and **Anne Marie** and by all of us who were given the grace to know and love her.

We request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at the Funeraria Paz, Naguilian Road, Baguio City. Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, February 24, 2001, at 8:00 a.m. at St. Vincent Church. Interment will immediately follow at the Baguio City Cemetery.

Jude T. Carreon

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 20, 2001 at the age of 32.

His loving wife **IA**; children **JUDE ADRIAN** and **JUDE ANGELO**; mother **AURORA**; brothers **MARCEL** and **MARICAR**, **DINO** and **MARGIE**; brothers-in-law **DEMY** and **MICHELLE**, **EDONG** and **CONNIE**, **ARSI**, **REY** and **SOL** and **BONG**; aunties, uncles, cousins, friends and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Capitol Memorial Chapels, 739 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, February 24, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at the Paz Crematory, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the San Beda Chapel, Mendiola, Manila.

In Loving Memory

on the **First Death Anniversary** of

ILUMINADO "LUMING" GALVEZ, M.D.

who joined his Creator on February 22, 2001 at the age of 74 in Maryland, U.S.A.

Holy Masses will be offered today at the family residence located at 324 Galvez St., Balagtas, Bulacan at 3:00 p.m. and at 121 St. Andrews Drive E. Fort Washington, Maryland on February 24, 2001.

The bereaved wife **FELICIDAD**; children **VER** and **CORA**, **BENNY** and **FEBES**, **DANNY** and **TESSIE**, **AMY** and **TEDDY**, **LORNA** and **JIMMY**, **NENETTE** and **BENJIE**, **COCOY** and **OCHIE**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

CATHERINE YABUT VALERIO

Feb. 13, 1957 - Feb. 19, 2001

Her husband **Victor**; children **Jonathan**, **Mark**, **Geoffrey**, **James** and **Matthew**; brother and sisters **Clift**, **Joyce**, **Susan** and **Teresa**; brother and sister-in-laws; nephews and nieces request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at their residence at 135 M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila.

Interment will be at the Garden of Memories, Bagong Calzada, Pateros, on Saturday, February 24, 2001 at 3:00 P.M.

The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want Psalm 23:1

Our Dearly Beloved

Medin Erum Regis

Peacefully joined our Creator on February 19, 2001 at the age of 80.

We, her loving family, Melba R. Sebastian, Elizenda Chin, Antonina Largo, Chauncey Regis, Ramon Regis, Marievic Nazareno, son-in-law Amb. Roberto Sebastian, grandchildren Rommel, Marie, Roberto Jr., Queen, Marshan, Dannie Anne, Christine, Daniel, Marvin, Jovic, Ryan, Maridin, MM, AJ and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Presidential Chapel of Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes, Camus Ext., Davao City.

Interment at the Davao Memorial Park at 8:00 in the morning on February 24, 2001.

'Jesus King of Mercy, I Trust in You.'

We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God.

2 Corinthians 4:14

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COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City
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GM Phils. adds Subaru to brand lineup

BY VERNON B. SARNE

GM AUTOMOBILES Phils. is deviating from the conventions of selling cars. While its rivals are concentrating on a single-brand product line, GMPh is bent on strengthening its market presence here by distributing various brands owned by General Motors Corp. (or which GM has a stake in). The concept is to retail different makes under one roof—or through GM AutoWorld dealerships, to be exact—to give customers the benefit of choosing from a wide selection of makes and models. Imagine a supermarket that vends cars instead of canned goods.

GMPh has announced that the newest addition to its stable is Subaru, the Japanese automaker specializing in all-wheel-drive vehicles. Last year, GM bought a 20-percent equity stake in Subaru owner Fuji Heavy Industries worth US$1.4 billion. Subaru, previously marketed here by Columbian Motors Corp., joins Opel, Chevrolet and Suzuki as the brands being carried by GMPh.

FHI has a broad cooperation with GM in a number of areas and both companies have been working together to realize the benefits of the alliance. Though both companies are making progress in such areas as development and purchasing, GM Philippines is the first GM operating unit that will distribute Subaru vehicles as a result of the cooperation in sales and marketing, Subaru general manager for Asia, Pacific and Latin America sales Eiichi Matsumoto explained.

Subaru will initially compete in the compact sport-utility vehicle segment, with the 2.0-liter Forester arriving in the next couple of months. The small SUV segment is one of the most promising in the Philippine automotive market. The Forester's unique combination of all-wheel drive and horizontally opposed engine enables car-like handling and ride with SUV versatility, said GMPh president Harold Koh. He promised competitive pricing for the Forester, even as he expressed confidence that it will not clash head-on with the Suzuki Grand Vitara, another small SUV sold at GM AutoWorld showrooms.

GM AutoWorld has branches in Quezon City, Makati, Cebu and Pampanga. Another one is opening on Shaw Boulevard this year.

Gear up and prevent vehicle theft

NEXT to a residential home, your vehicle is probably the next most valuable possession among your roster of assets. Not only has it decreased a great deal of funding but its maintenance and upkeep have definitely used up a lot of your time and labor. As such, your vehicle needs the same protection and security you give to other investments.

Safeguard your vehicles from theft with these antiburglary pointers from Isuzu Philippines Corp., your responsible partner:

- Do not leave your keys inside the vehicle for any reason. Do not hide a second set of keys in your car.
- Always close your windows and lock your doors.
- Put all packages and personal items out of sight since these invite theft.
- Never leave your car running and unattended.
- Park in well-lighted areas and as close as possible to the entrance of an open business.
- Park your car in a garage if you have one and always lock your garage door. Lock your car even if parked in a garage.
- Back your car into the driveway. If you drive forward, a car thief could raise the hood to hot wire the car and it would appear to the neighbors that you are just working on the car.
- Etch your vehicle identification number in hard-to-find spots.
- When selling a car, do not let a potential buyer test-drive your car alone.
- When going out of town, remove the fusible link to detain engine from running.

Isuzu strongly suggests that you install any of the following antitheft devices:

- Steering wheel lock—A long metal bar fitted on the steering wheel that would prevent the steering wheel from being turned.
- Kill Switches—Gadgets that prevent the flow of fuel to the engine until the switch is activated.
- Tire locks—Locks that deter tires from being moved.
- Car alarm—A caution device equipped with motion sensors, impact sensors and loud tones.
- Electronic key—An electronic system that allows the vehicle to operate only with a specifically coded key.
- Window etching—This helps in recovering the vehicle if stolen
- Theft deterrent decals—Seals or stickers may bluff a car thief.

Be leery of vehicle theft. Professional car scum can steal any vehicle out of common sense and an overlay of antitheft devices can sack that plot of burglary.

Prestigious award for Hyundai, Kia chair

FULL TANK

Al S. Mendoza

FROM Maricar C. Parco of Ford, this news flash:

Ford Motor Co. suppliers worldwide can become ISO 14001 certified with an online course that includes the concept of classroom training and in-depth instruction on implementation.

The company is the first to provide this type of supplier training on the Web. ISO 14001 is one of the most stringent environmental standards under which independent auditors evaluate environmental processes and systems.

Ford suppliers can register on the Web, pay a nominal fee and have a 12-month access to the training.

"At Ford, we believe that environmental leadership supports our business objectives and shareholders value," said Tim O'Brien, director of the Ford Environmental Quality Office. "We are very proud that our supplier-business partners are demonstrating a similar view of their leadership in getting certified."

I hope the rest of the world's vehicle manufacturers follow Ford's example. Anything that deals with environmental concerns should be emulated to the hilt.

* * *

Toyota and Nissan had a co-star billing during the 33rd Golden Tee at the Manila Golf Club last week.

Hole-in-one prizes were Toyota's Echo Verso and Echo Hatch, and Nissan's Verita and Cefiro.

Both car giants are noted golf supporters. Through the years, I've seen them sponsor hole-in-one prizes not only in big tournaments but also in club-level tournaments. Unselfishness is always a major key in developing goodwill to the customers.

* * *

But of course Mitsubishi is not far behind in this aspect. Always, Mitsubishi's Mel Dizon makes it a point to give the car company a major role in the Philippine Open for more than a decade now. For example, Mitsubishi has again agreed to sponsor hole-in-one prizes in the Philippine Open set for March 29 to April 1 at Wack Wack.

Mitsubishi loves tradition that is why it has not lost interest in providing support to the country's oldest major sports event.

Already being planned are three Mitsubishi cars as hole-in-one prizes for the Media and Officials Tournament, the Pro-Am and the tournament proper.

Mel's front-act, trouble-shooting lady, Thelma Lozano, is now busy hammering out the details of Mitsubishi's sponsorship of the Philippine Open. And with Thelma around, expect Mitsubishi to be in the forefront of things again.

Here's to Mel and Thelma. And, yes, to Ding Benitez, too. Where have you been hibernating, Ding kabaleyan?

* * *

Honda's Arnel Doria, through his energetic Woman Friday Tin Tin Reyes, is pumped-up for a corpuscle Honda presence in Kuala Lumpur when the Formula 1 stages its second leg there in March.'

The car company has made its presence felt in the car racing circuit worldwide for many years now, with Alex Zanardi lording it over one time in America's CART races. Zanardi has been a Honda mainstay in the CART series, although he didn't do quite well in Formula 1.

Honda has been spending billions of pesos in developing hi-tech racing engines, a throwback to the car company's consistent dedication to developing quality engines for its best-selling sedans and other passenger-car products.

All the best, Arnel. And, yes, Tin Tin, don't lose those taekwondo curves, OK?

* * *

Congratulations to Mong Koo Chung, chair and CEO of Hyundai Motor Corp. and Kia Motors, for receiving recently the "Distinguished Service Citation" award from the Automotive Hall of Fame in America.

Chung is the first Korean and only the second Asian (the other is Honda president Hiroyuki Yoshino) to receive the award as a captain in the world of automotive manufacturing.

With the award, Chung joins a list of industry luminaries that include legendary auto executives like Henry Ford and ex-Chrysler CEO Lee Iacocca.

The award was bestowed on Chung largely for his sound management of Hyundai and Kia, which led to record earnings for both companies on the strength of their 50-percent increase in sales in the ultra-competitive US market for the year 2000. Chung was also lauded for the impressive turnaround at Kia Motors, a company that floundered after the Asian currency crisis in 1997, but has since returned to profit in the past two years.

The Automotive Hall of Fame was established in 1939.

Cheers to Chair Chung. An Asian winning such a prestigious award deserves our applause.

* * *

Recently, the Skyway operator opened an E-PASS ONLY lane at the Sucat toll exit and has started to expand the Filinvest Toll Plaza to include two more lanes.

Pending the completion of these additional lanes, the operator continues to think of ways to add more value to the E-PASS to attract the cash- and coupon-paying motorists to avail of the E-PASS service.

I commend the move. It will surely help ease the traffic flow in those areas.

* * *

QUOTE ME. The correct, apter translation of "Keep Distance" is "Huwag Tutok." The translation "Tamang Agwat Lamang" is vague.

BMW launches zero-interest 'ultimate financing' plan

TO GIVE luxury car buyers in the country greater flexibility in the purchase of their ultimate dream machines, BMW dealers has launched a zero-interest financing promotion for those seeking to acquire the popular 316i and 318iA models starting this month.

Dubbed as the "Ultimate Financing for the Ultimate Driving Machine" scheme, this easy payment plan allows potential buyers of the BMW 316i and 318iA (with or without Steptronic function) the option of purchasing the car after making a 50-percent down payment with the balance payable interest-free over the next year, in 12 monthly installments.

The promo will run from Feb. 14 to March 13 at BMW dealers nationwide.

Toward . . .

(From page B12)

denigrated as a "station wagon on steroids" since, like other all-wheel-drive, car-based SUVs, it looks beefy yet doesn't have the transfer case or low-range gearing of a true 4x4 off-roader. But car-based SUVs like the Highlander have a good reason for being. Surveys have consistently shown that only about 10 percent of SUV owners ever really venture off-road. It has finally dawned on auto manufacturers that to most SUV buyers, a vehicle's riding comfort, handling and fuel economy on the asphalt are more important than rock-climbing and off-road prowess. This explains why car-based SUVs are evolving into the fastest-growing segment of the market. Which is just as well, because they are generally safer when on the road than the truck-based types—although not when off it.

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CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

'Evolving' AUVs unfazed by surge of new sedan models

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

THE BEST-SELLING vehicles in the country today are undoubtedly the Asian utility vehicles (AUVs). They have conquered the top two posts in Philippine automotive records. The top-selling passenger car only managed to land on the No. 3 post.

The phenomenal shift of the market from passenger cars to utility vehicles continues to strengthen as high-ground-clearance, multipassenger capacity AUVs continue to improve in designs, styles and amenities.

Top sedan seller Honda Cars Philippines Inc. unveiled its newest Honda Civic last week to kick off the passengers car manufacturers' drive to retake the throne this year. Others are expected to follow suit. Industry observers expect Nissan and Mitsubishi to launch their own improved units, while General Motors is reportedly preparing Subaru cars' entry in the country.

AUV makers—the sunshine segment of the commercial vehicle category—are consequently bracing themselves for the surge of the new "hot wheels."

Isuzu Philippines Inc.—the AUV maker which bannered the 4JX1 direct injection diesel engine—started the year of the snake with the January launch of Hi-Lander X-TRM Elite, a near-luxury SUV featuring plush black and gray leather seat trims and laminated wood grain panel with an in-dash CD and stereo system. Isuzu claims that apart from its looks, its driving comfort was enhanced capitalizing on spacious headroom and legroom.

TWO-LITER Revo GSX enters RP

Toyota Motor Philippines—the top AUV maker in the country today—launched Feb. 19 the new Revo GSX variant with its 2-liter 1RZ-E Single Overhead Camshaft (SOHC) Electronic Fuel Injection engine and several other Revo variants.

No. 2 AUV Mitsubishi's Adventure is expected to launch upgrades to maintain its position. Aside from modifications, it may launch special editions too.

"Although there will be new model introductions of passenger cars, in a way it will affect the AUV. But I believe the volume will still be sustained considering the AUV segment/models have offered more value for money. AUVs are passenger and commercial vehicles rolled into one," said Froy Dytianquin, Mitsubishi Motor Philippines' manager for marketing.

He added that the AUV segment has already captured a share of the sedan market. Dytianquin said he is confident because there are Filipino motorists "graduating" from passenger cars.

"With the development of midsize luxury cars, two-liter segment, the prices of these cars have gone up. Definitely some people may migrate to the AUV class," he said.

Dytianquin said he feels confident it will still be the AUV class that will maintain strong position in the market since higher ground clearance particularly for the rainy season is one preliminary issue in buying a vehicle.

Toyota Motor Philippines' media relation officer Ariel de Jesus said observers would witness if buyers shift preferences this year.

"Let's see now if the market will shift preferences, from AUVs back to the passenger car market," he said.

De Jesus stressed, however, that AUVs amenities can compete head on with any sedan.

Danny Isla, Toyota's vice president for marketing, said there would always be room for improvements and for creativity for AUVs as more styles and designs are adopted.

"The AUV has its following already. AUV sales will be affected in a way. There may be some shifting as far as sales are concerned. But I think the AUVs will still remain the best selling vehicles in the country," said De Jesus.

Isla added that it is safe to assume that the AUV market has to lead the passenger market because of the evolution of the AUV.

"It's no longer a plain AUV. You can see an AUV wearing mags, all-power amenities, leather seats. People are shifting for a practical and versatile vehicle," he said.

Toward safer sport utility vehicles

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THE RECALL last August of 6.5 million defective Firestone tires, some of which were fitted on Ford Explorer sport utility vehicles (SUVs), focused public attention anew on the questionable safety of SUVs. Ever since the sales of SUVs began to soar in the late 1980s, consumer and safety advocates have expressed concern about their tendency to roll over, their fuel-guzzling, poor handling, harsh ride and deadly advantage in multiple-vehicle collisions with passenger cars.

Consumer Reports Sport Utility Vehicle Special 2001 claims that in 1999, per the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) of the United States, the single-vehicle rollover death rate in SUVs and pickup trucks was nearly five times as high as the rate in the largest cars. Being taller than cars, SUVs have a higher center of gravity and are more top-heavy, which translates into a propensity to tip onto two wheels or roll over when the driver swerves sharply to avoid an accident, takes a corner too fast or loses control because a tire suddenly blows out.

But SUV fans need not lose heart because auto manufacturers have responded to safety concerns by introducing new safety features in SUVs as options or standard equipment, such as four-wheel antilock brake systems, dual-stage front airbags that deploy at different speeds depending on the force of impact, seatbelt pretensioners and seatbelt force limiters. Electronic stability control, which helps keep a vehicle on its intended path during a turn and which used to be available only on luxury cars, is now standard with all Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Toyota and Lexus SUVs in the United States except the Toyota RAV4. Side-curtain airbags, which deploy across both the front and rear side windows after a side impact to minimize head injury, will be available on the Toyota Sequoia and the 2002 Ford Explorer.

Consumer Reports reveals that Ford will integrate their side-curtain airbags with a new rollover detection system to be introduced later this year. This detection system will automatically deploy the side-curtain airbags should the vehicle tilt over beyond a certain predetermined angle. In addition, a recently passed auto safety law requires all vehicles in the United States to be equipped, within three years, with a warning system that would alert drivers that a tire has lost air pressure. This could help prevent tire blowouts due to underinflation. The big question is whether SUVs sold in the Philippines will be equipped with these safety features, given our inadequate auto safety laws.

Meanwhile, the increasing popularity of car-based SUVs is another step toward safer sport utes. While traditional, pickup truck-based SUVs like the Chevrolet Blazer, Nissan Xterra and Toyota 4Runner remain in the market, car-based SUVs that ride and handle better, sit closer to the ground and thus are safer make up the new wave. The trend was started by the "cute utes," the compact Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V and Subaru Forester. After the midsized? Lexus RX300 SUV became a bestseller in the United States, other carmakers jumped into the lucrative SUV market with models built on unibody-type car platforms with four-wheel independent suspension instead of the body-on-frame chassis and rigid axle of pickups. Examples of other car-based SUVs are the Nissan Pathfinder, Ford Escape and new, Camry-based Toyota Highlander. Incidentally, the popular Mitsubishi Pajero, which used to be a clunky, truck-based SUV, joined the unibody/four-wheel independent suspension bandwagon with its totally redesigned 2001 model.

The Toyota Highlander has been

TOWARD/p.11

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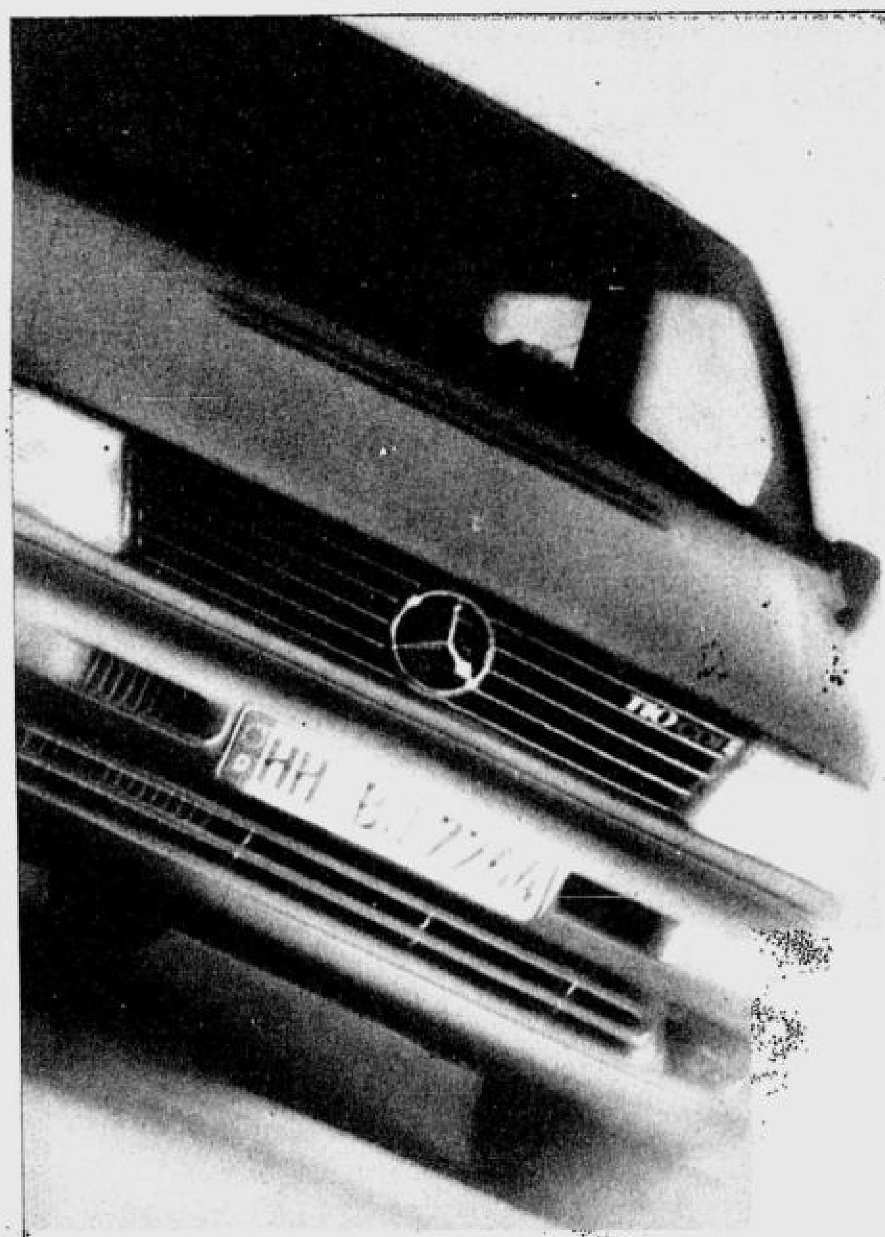

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Keppel Centre, Cebu City
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MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

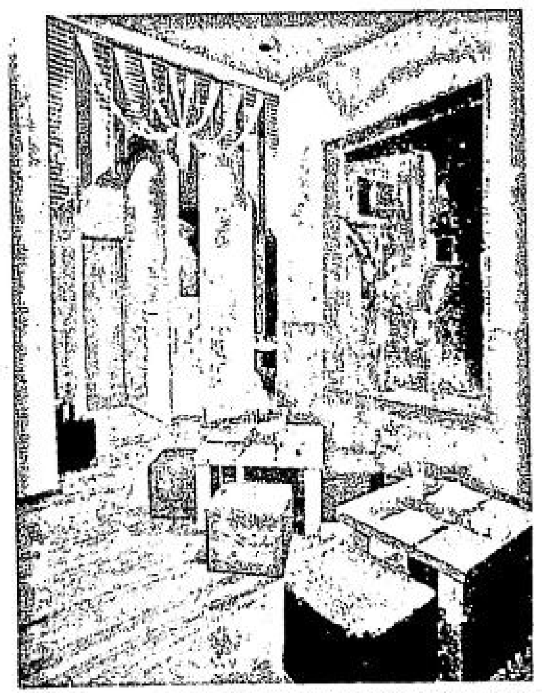
LIFESTYL Tastes

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

PRIVATE dining room features a modern interpretation of India—niches filled with flowers, strong colors and throw pillows encrusted with beadwork.

A new rage called Raj

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Bobot Meru



RAJ is composed of separate dining spaces for intimacy. One space is segregated by a beaded swag curtain. It also introduces a new dining concept—sitting on cubed stools instead of squatting on the floor.

FRIENDS of restaurateur Delfin Justiniano Montano had advised him against opening an Indian restaurant in Manila. There's a lot of prejudice against Indian food, mostly based on our biases against spices and unflattering stereotypes of Indians.

Montano's Raj restaurant in Malate's hip night-life zone doesn't come across as an ethnic dining place. The ambience doesn't exude the typical restaurant you'd see in Bombay or Delhi—incense, filigree, shrill singing voices of pop singers, heavy and ornate woodwork and waiters in Nehru jackets. Raj's concept is cosmopolitan. It's the kind of restaurant you'd see in London or New York.

While most Filipinos shudder at chilies and pungent spices, Montano grew up enjoying the richness of Indian cuisine. His grandmother Virginia, the wife of former Sen. Justiniano Montano, had traveled worldwide and specialized in exotic cuisines, particularly Indian food.

When Montano studied in the prestigious hospitality school Les Roches in Switzerland, he researched on the diversity of Indian cuisine. To

A NEW/ p.C6

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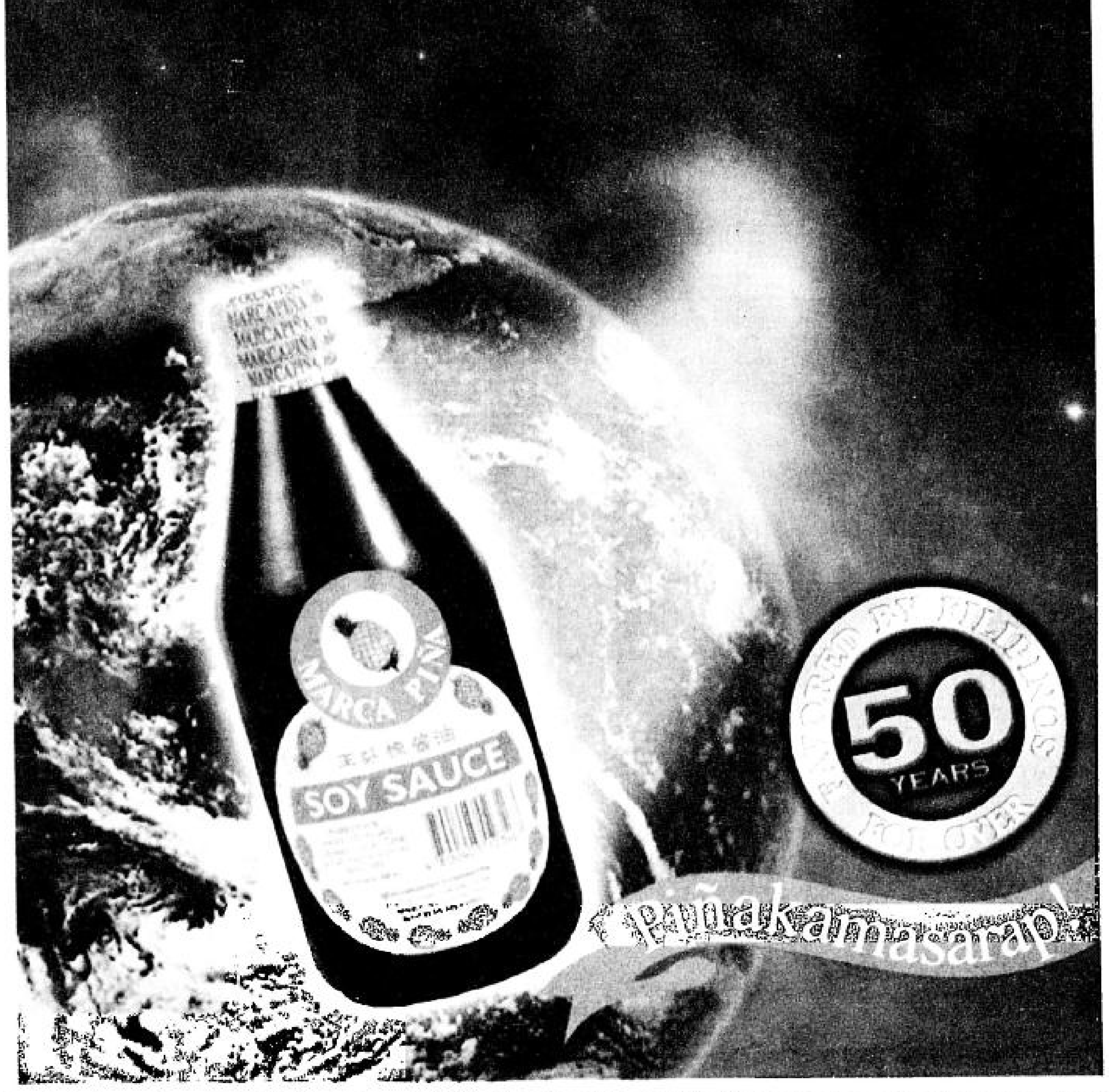
Now, more and more people in more and more countries enjoy the rich, distinct flavor of Marca Piña Soy Sauce!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"In less than 2 months, I easily lost 20 lbs.!" -Evelyn
"After losing 35 lbs., I am slimmer now than when I was single!" -Nancy
"I lost 19 lbs. thanks to Marie-France, the weight-loss professionals!" -Elle

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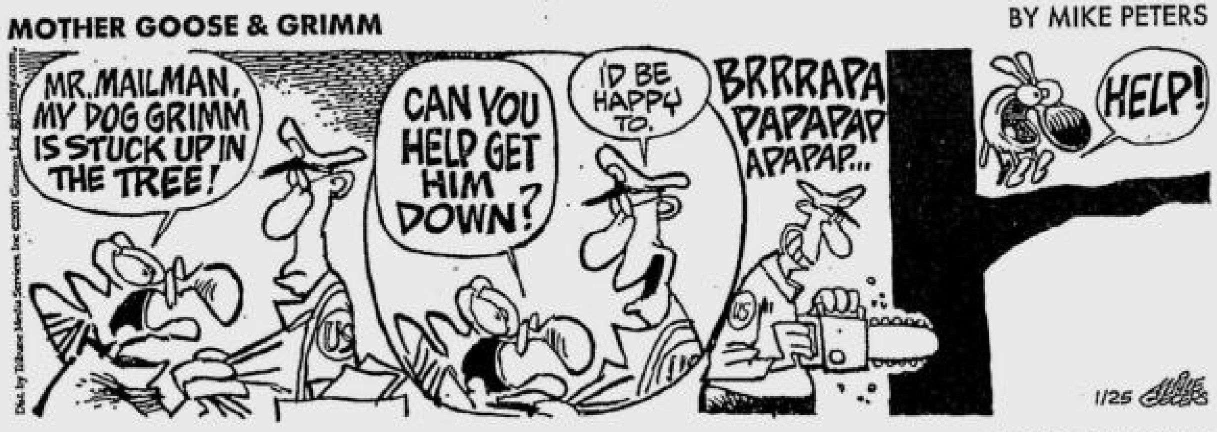
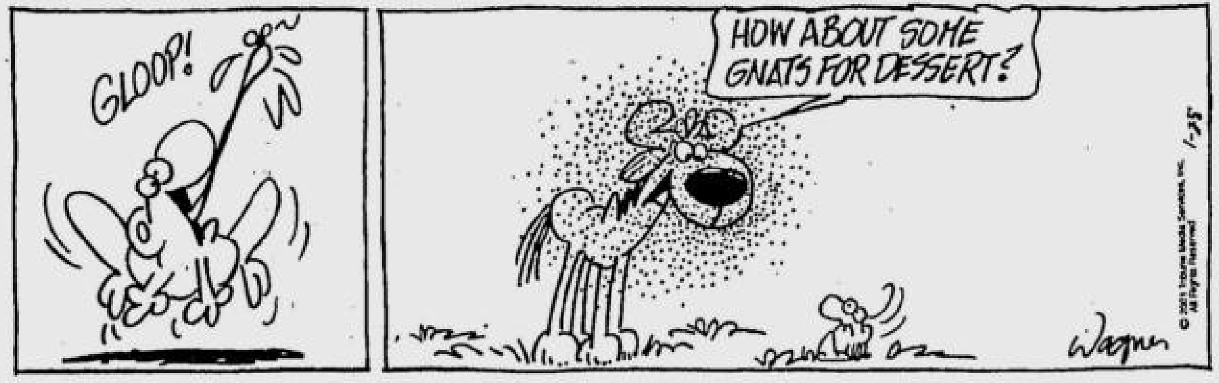
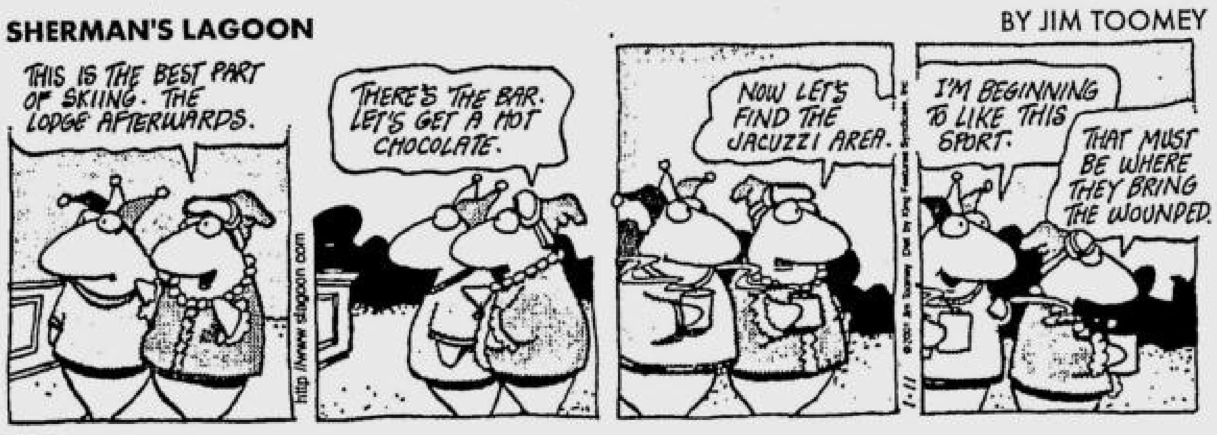
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM
BY MIKE PETERS


MR. MAILMAN, MY DOG GRIMM IS STUCK UP IN THE TREE!
CAN YOU HELP GET HIM DOWN?
I'D BE HAPPY TO.
BRRRAPA PAPAPAP APAPAP...
HELP!
1/25

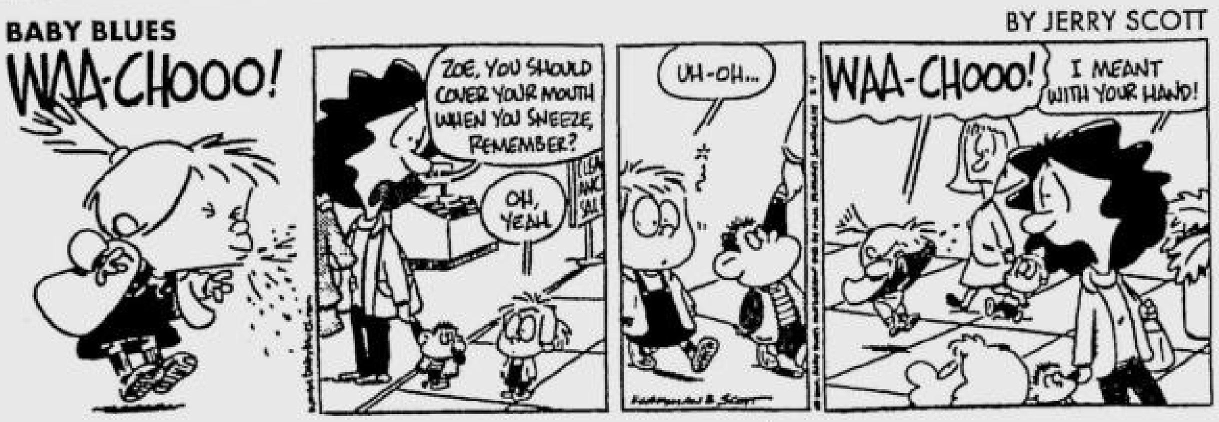
ANIMAL CRACKER
BY FRED WAGNER


GLOOP!
HOW ABOUT SOME GNATS FOR DESSERT?
1-25
Wagner

SHERMAN'S LAGOON
BY JIM TOOMEY


THIS IS THE BEST PART OF SKIING. THE LODGE AFTERWARDS.
THERE'S THE BAR. LET'S GET A HOT CHOCOLATE.
NOW LET'S FIND THE JACUZZI AREA.
I'M BEGINNING TO LIKE THIS SPORT.
THAT MUST BE WHERE THEY BRING THE WOUNDED.
http://www.slagoon.com
1-11

BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


WAA-CHOOO!
ZOE, YOU SHOULD COVER YOUR MOUTH WHEN YOU SNEEZE, REMEMBER?
OH, YEAH.
UH-OH...
WAA-CHOOO!
I MEANT WITH YOUR HAND!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Julius Erving, Drew Barrymore, Edward Kennedy, Sybil Leek, Michael Chang, Bobby Hendricks

Happy Birthday: You can have the best of both worlds if you're prepared to work hard this year. You have the stamina coupled with brilliant ideas. Now all you have to do is believe in yourself and forge ahead. You're the only one holding you back, so lighten up and start the ball rolling. Your numbers: 15, 23, 27, 36, 41, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your boss will let you know if you haven't been pulling your weight. Get some of your household chores out of the way before the weekend.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Partnerships will be hot. You have the know-how to take over and get things done. Don't be surprised if someone asks you to lead a group.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Emotional outbursts will cause embarrassment and a lack of respect. You must contain your feelings, regardless of the circumstances. Don't be sidetracked by individuals who enjoy making trouble.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): People from your past will surface. Don't be too quick to pick up where you left off. You shouldn't be moving backward. You already have a problem letting go of the past.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Money you don't have to work for, such as winnings, rebates, surrenders or gifts, should come your way. You can make valuable purchases for your home. Be sure to save some for a rainy day.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Travel will lead to long-distance romance. Don't be too eager for intimacy. Find out all you can about this intriguing individual before you give your heart away.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your personal life may not be going the way you want it to, but you can make major moves in your profession. Don't miss opportunities at work because someone is playing with your heart.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will be able to take a break from your personal troubles if you get out with old friends. Physical activities will help relieve the stress.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Personal problems will mount. You need to distance yourself from the situation. Property deals can go through, but sort out your financial position first.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): New relationships will develop with people you meet at a wedding or social gathering. Don't let others sway your opinion. Follow your heart and see where it leads you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can come up with some pretty good ideas that will help turn your financial situation around. Don't let your lack of self-confidence hold you back.

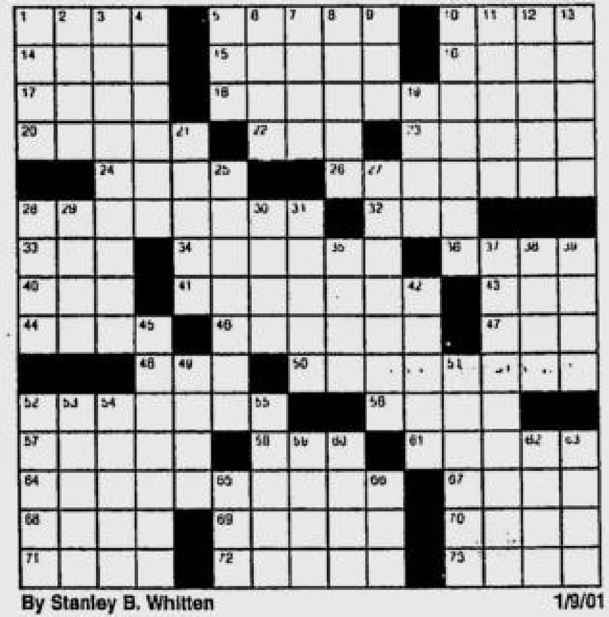
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your active imagination may take over if you let it. Dreams of distant lands and foreign cultures will lead you to organizations that can offer the knowledge.

Birthday Baby: You are an action person, but it's really the excitement that draws you. You like to be in the center of, and excel at, activities that interest you.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS
1 Pub flyer
5 Great brilliance
10 Mexican sandwich
14 Stench
15 Watered fabric
16 Impediment
17 Singer McEntire
18 Intensifying words, formally?
20 1983 Indy 500 winner
22 Tennis shot
23 Theater passageway
24 Guns it in neutral
26 Speak to
28 Ceremonial feast
32 Boston hrs.
33 Circle segment
34 Island garb
36 Lead player
40 TV pioneer co.
41 Nervous quivers
43 Garden tool
44 Specified time
46 Wynn of "Dr. Strangelove"
47 Wallet single
48 One Stooge
50 Recovered ownership
52 Gruesome
56 First lady of scat
57 Maine college town
58 Grab hold of
61 Suffers defeat
64 Libertine, formally?
67 Adjective-forming suffix
68 Give off
69 Main artery
70 Cub Sammy
71 Drawstring
72 Lawman Earp
73 Observes


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73

By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL
1/9/01

DOWN
1 Actress Diana
2 Gulf of the Arabian Sea
3 Bay lynx, formally?
4 Hit the road
5 Letters on candies?
6 Fossil fuel
7 Ritzy wheels
8 Island in Netherlands Antilles
9 Golf-bag item
10 Promotional tops
11 Aromatic herb
12 Pages
13 Eyes lasciviously
19 Fellas
21 Nautical command
25 More blunt
27 Reduce in rank
28 Cowboy's chum
29 Killer whale
30 Canadian tribe
31 Four-bagger
35 Zilch
37 Hoyden, formally?
38 Top-drawer
39 Marsh plant
42 New Zealand Olympic runner
45 Spring (from)
49 Ancient Greek coin
51 Plaza Hotel girl
52 Example
53 Fragrance
54 Dunce-cap shaped
55 Relish
59 Atmosphere
60 Stuffing stuff
62 Otherwise
63 Black and Red
65 Eurasian crow
66 ___ "King" Cole

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

D	O	F	F		A	C	R	I	D		A	J	A	R
A	B	L	E		S	H	A	R	I		P	O	L	E
W	O	O	D	Y	H	A	Y	E	S		P	E	T	E
N	E	E		E	O	N	S		R	E	A	P	E	D
			T	A	R	T		C	O	L	L	A	R	S
D	E	B	A	S	E		C	O	B	A	L	T		
A	L	E	U	T		H	A	V	E	N		E	S	S
F	L	A	T		C	O	N	E	S		D	R	E	I
T	A	R		J	A	U	N	T		T	O	N	E	R
		B	L	U	R	R	Y		B	R	O	O	K	E
S	T	R	I	D	E	S		P	R	O	M			
T	H	Y	M	E	S		M	E	A	L		J	A	M
A	R	A	B		F	R	A	N	K	L	E	A	H	Y
R	E	N	O		O	U	N	C	E		E	V	E	R
S	E	T	S		R	E	N	E	S		L	A	M	A

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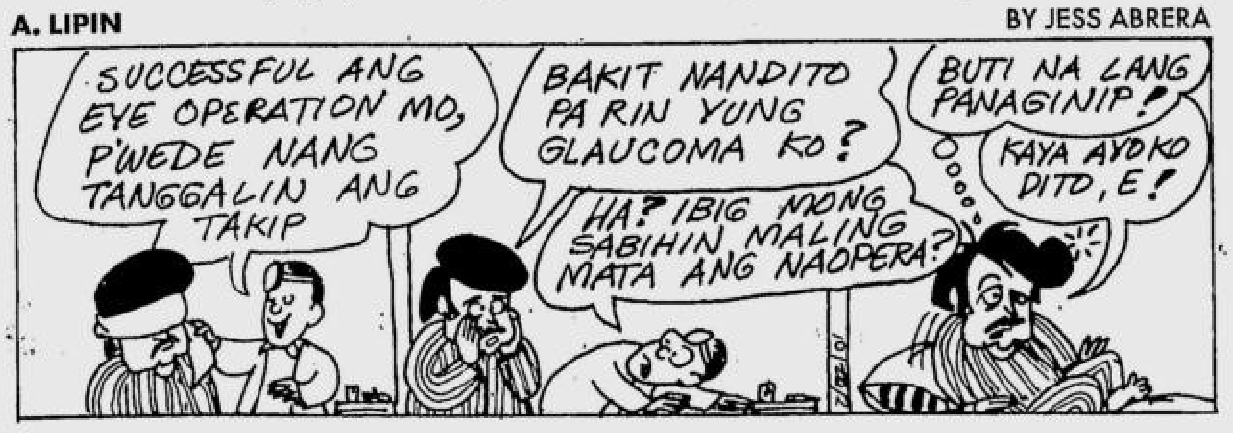
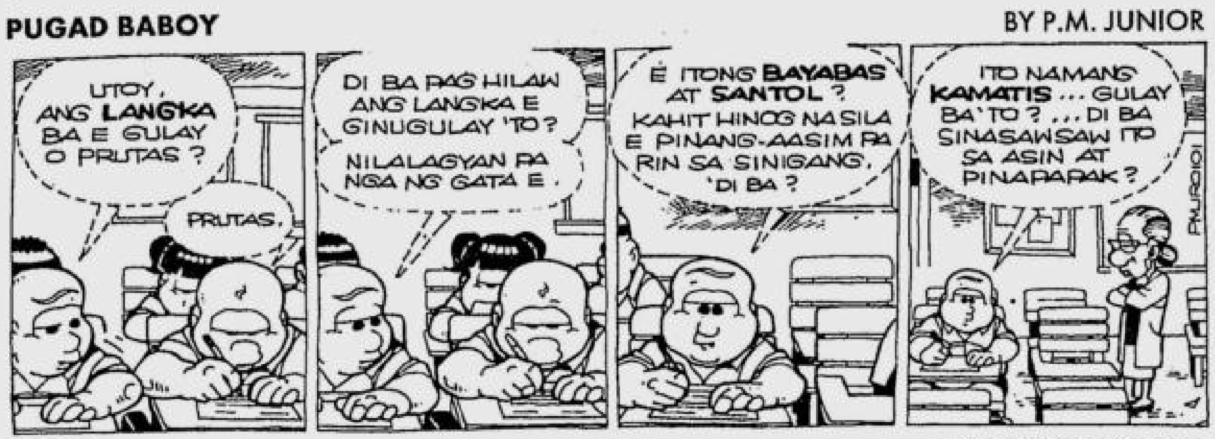
1/9/01

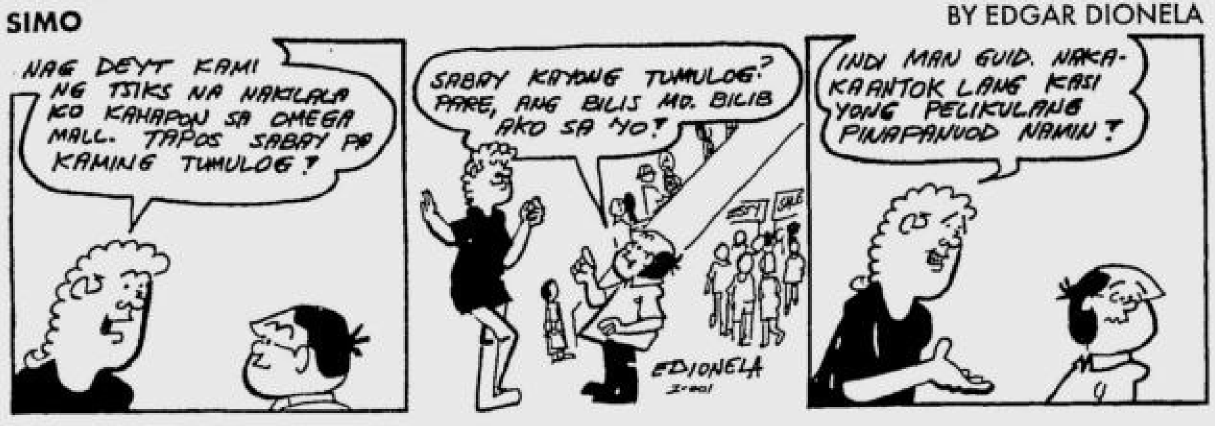
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


SUCCESSFUL ANG EYE OPERATION MO, P'WEDE NANG TANGGALIN ANG TAKIP
BAKIT NANDITO PA RIN YUNG GLAUCOMA KO?
HA? IBIG MONG SABIHIN MALING MATA ANG NAOPERA?
BUTI NA LANG PANAGINIP!
KAYA AYOKO DITO, E!

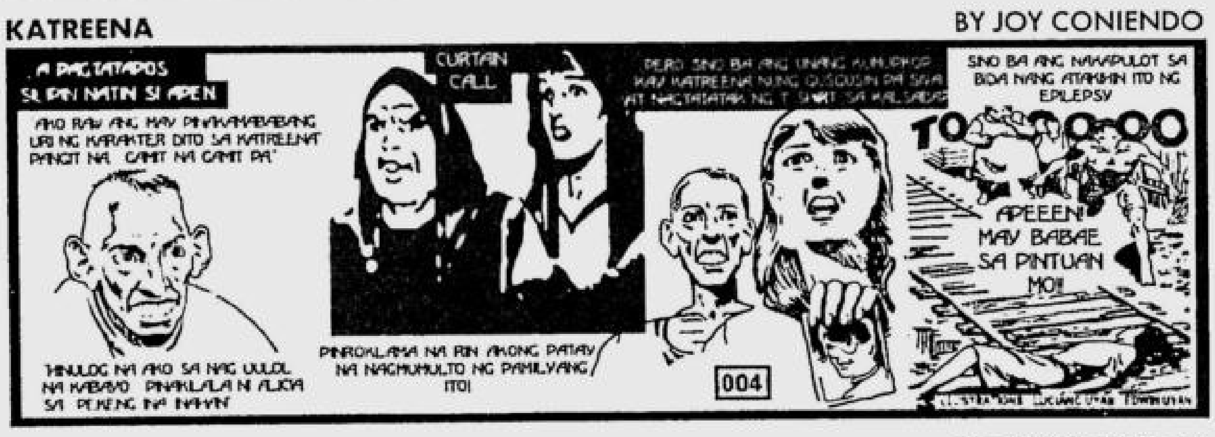
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


UTOY, ANG LANGKA BA E GULAY O PRUTAS?
PRUTAS.
DI BA PAG HILAW ANG LANGKA E GINUGULAY 'TO?
NILALAGYAN PA NGA NG GATA E.
E ITONG BAYABAS AT SANTOL? KAHIT HINOG NA SILA E PINANG-AASIM PA RIN SA SINIGANG, 'DI BA?
ITO NAMANG KAMATIS... GULAY BA'TO?... DI BA SINASAWSAW ITO SA ASIN AT PINAPAPAK?
PMJR0101

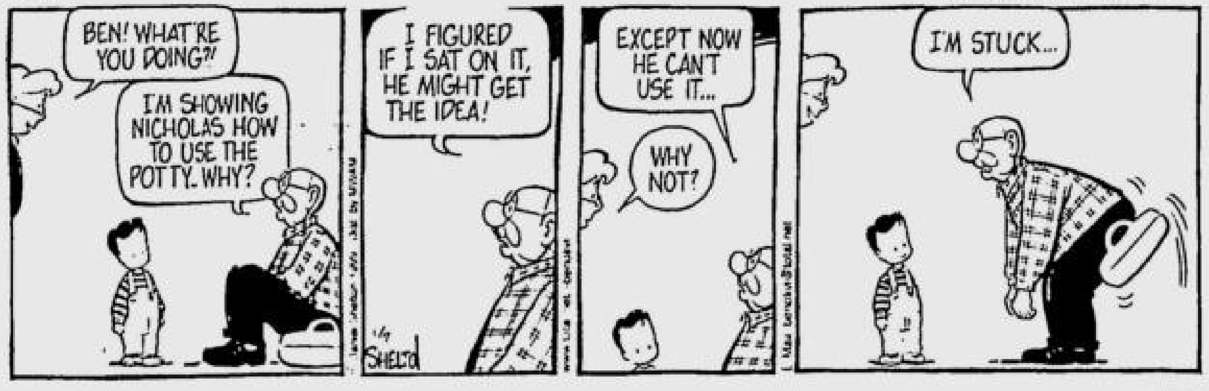
SIMO
BY EDGAR DIONELA


NAG DEYT KAMI NG TSIKS NA NAKILALA KO KAHAPON SA OMEGA MALL. TAPOS SABAY PA KAMING TUMULOG!
SABAY KAYONG TUMULOG? PARE, ANG BILIS MO. BILIB AKO SA 'YO!
INDI MAN GUID. NAKA-KAANTOK LANG KASI YONG PELIKULANG PINAPANUOD NAMIN!
EDIONELA 2-001

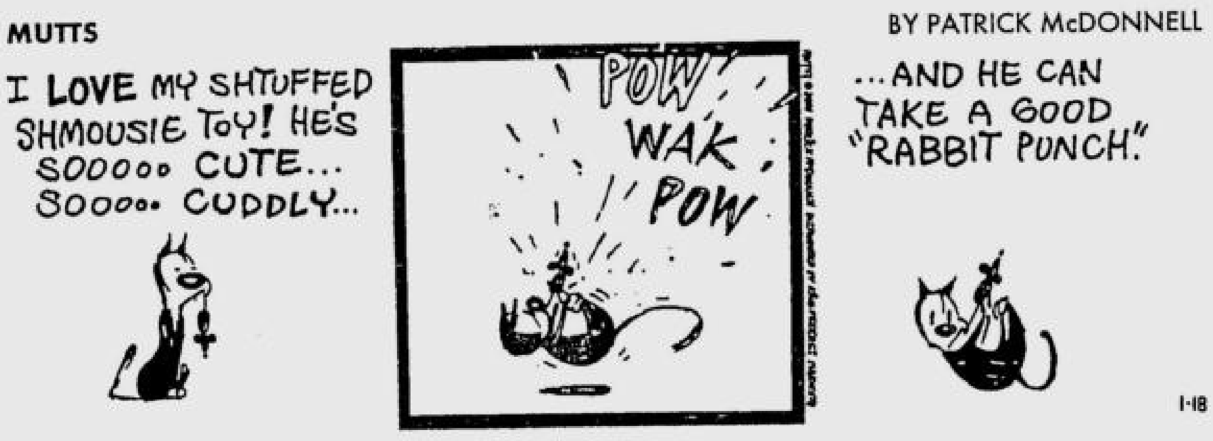
KATREENA
BY JOY CONIENDO


SA PAGTATAPOS SIPAIN NATIN SI APEN
AKO RAW ANG MAY PINAKAMABABANG URI NG KARAKTER DITO SA KATREENA'T PANGIT NA, GAMIT NA GAMIT PA
HINULOG NA AKO SA NAG UULOL NA KABAYO PINAKILALA NI ALICIA SA PEKENG INA NIYA
CURTAIN CALL
PINAGKALAMA NA RIN AKONG PATAY NA NAGMUMULTO NG PAMILYANG ITO!
PERO SINO BA ANG UNANG KUMUPKOP KAY KATREENA NUNG GUSGUSIN PA SIYA AT NAGTATATAK NG T-SHIRT SA KALSADA?
004
SINO BA ANG NAKAPULOT SA BIDA NANG ATAKIHIN ITO NG EPILEPSY
TOOOOO
APEEEN! MAY BABAE SA PINTUAN MO!!

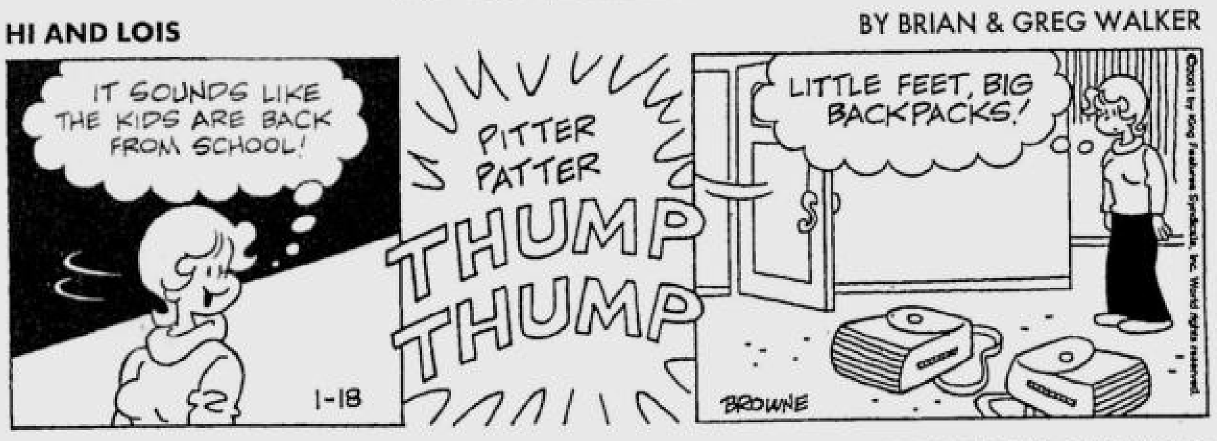
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
I'M SHOWING NICHOLAS HOW TO USE THE POTTY. WHY?
I FIGURED IF I SAT ON IT, HE MIGHT GET THE IDEA!
EXCEPT NOW HE CAN'T USE IT...
WHY NOT?
I'M STUCK...
SHELTON

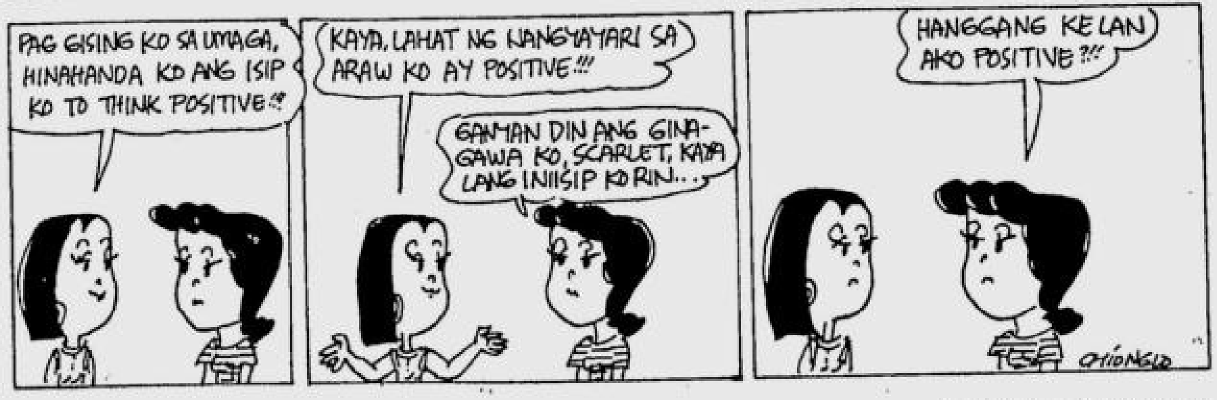
MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I LOVE MY SHTUFFED SHMOUSIE TOY! HE'S SOOOOO CUTE... SOOOO CUDDLY...
POW
WAK
POW
...AND HE CAN TAKE A GOOD "RABBIT PUNCH."
1-18

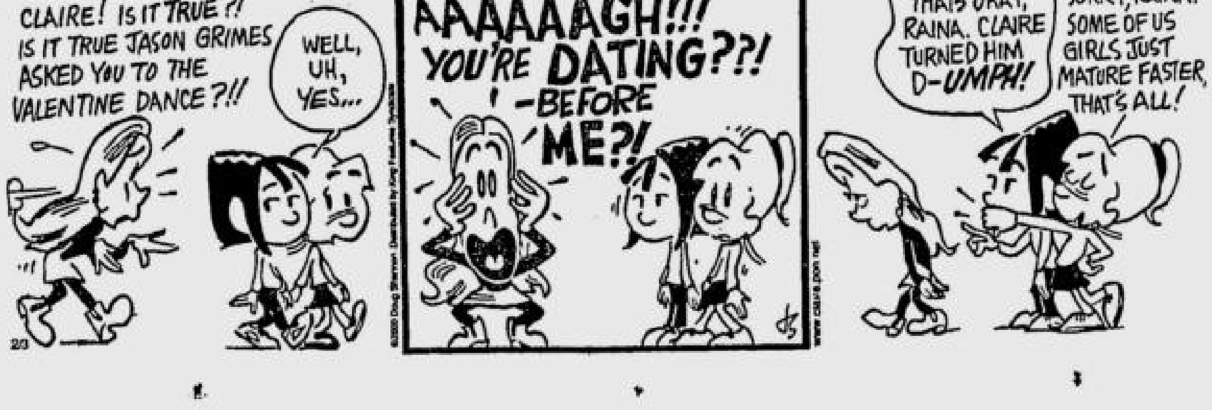
HI AND LOIS
BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


IT SOUNDS LIKE THE KIDS ARE BACK FROM SCHOOL!
1-18
PITTER PATTER
THUMP THUMP
LITTLE FEET, BIG BACKPACKS!
BROWNE

LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PAG GISING KO SA UMAGA, HINAHANDA KO ANG ISIP KO TO THINK POSITIVE!!
KAYA, LAHAT NG NANGYAYARI SA ARAW KO AY POSITIVE!!!
GANMAN DIN ANG GINA-GAWA KO, SCARLET, KAYA LANG INIISIP KO RIN...
HANGGANG KELAN AKO POSITIVE?!!
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE
BY DOUG SHANNON


CLAIRE! IS IT TRUE?! IS IT TRUE JASON GRIMES ASKED YOU TO THE VALENTINE DANCE?!!
WELL, UH, YES...
AAAAAAGH!!! YOU'RE DATING??! -BEFORE ME?!
THAT'S OKAY, RAINA. CLAIRE TURNED HIM D-UMPH!
SORRY, RAINA. SOME OF US GIRLS JUST MATURE FASTER, THAT'S ALL!

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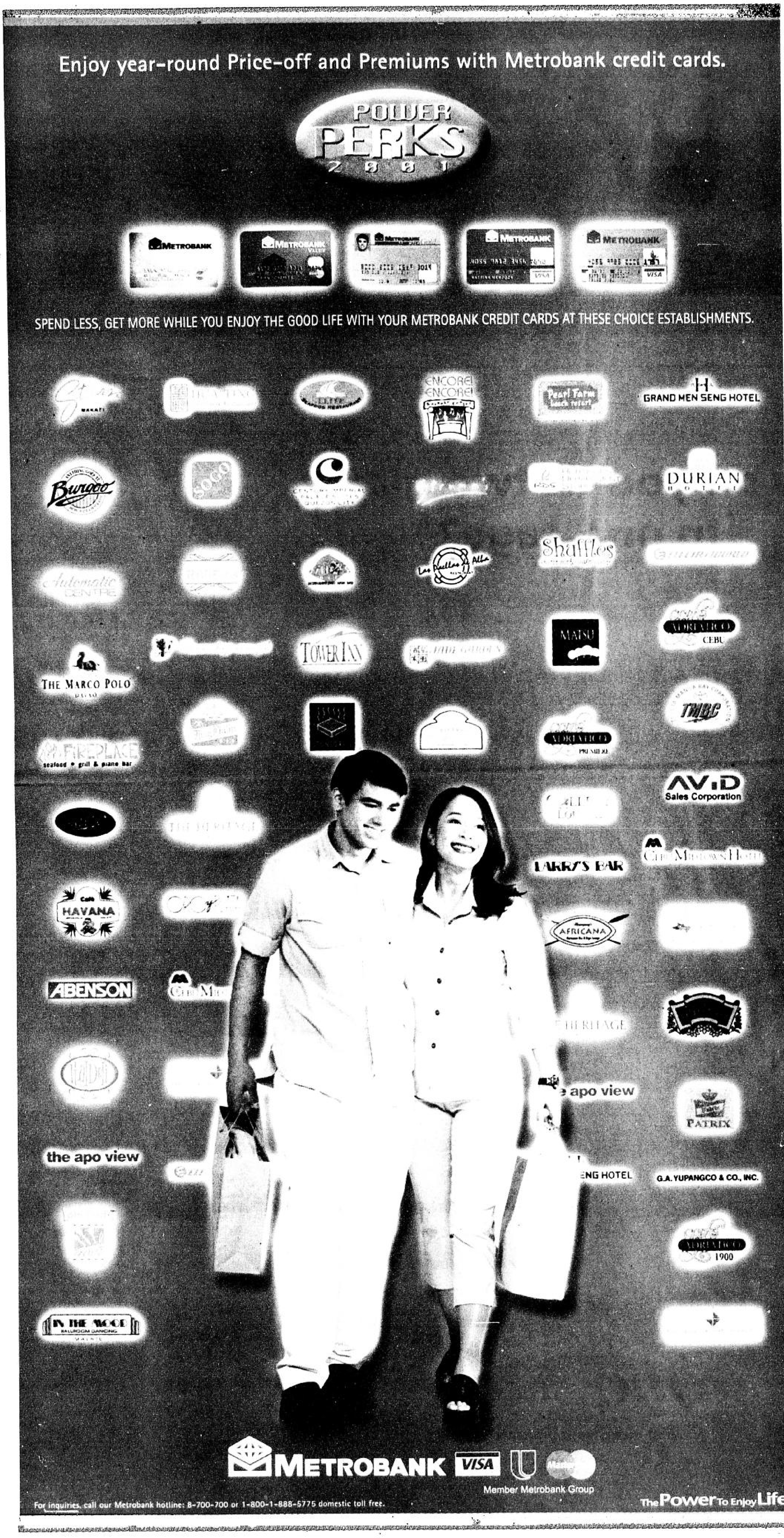

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All branches
- 10% discount on regular price Sony diskettes and tapes
- 10% discount on movie software

ELECTROWORLD
All branches
- 5% discount on accessories and software (excluding items on sale)
- 10% discount on extended warranty
- 20% discount on services (labor charges on upgrade, installation, check-up and repair)

SOGO
All branches
- Free umbrella for every big appliance purchase

BARS/RESTAURANTS

ANX
El Pueblo Real de Manila, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
- 15% discount on total food and beverage bill

BISTRO LORENZO
53 Annapolis St., Greenhills, San Juan
- 5% discount on total bill

BISTRO REMEDIOS
1911 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

BURGOO AMERICAN BAR AND RESTAURANT
310 Tomas Morato Ext., South Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City
3/L Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City
- Buy 3 main entrées and get the least priced entrée free

CAFÉ ADRIATICO 1900
1900 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

CAFÉ ADRIATICO CEBU
171 F. Ramos St., Cebu City
- 5% discount on total bill

CAFÉ ADRIATICO PREMIERE
1790 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

CAFÉ HAVANA
1903 M. Adriatico St. Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

CHIKAAN
Juana Osmeña St.
- 5% discount on food only

DINO'S GRILL AND SUSHI BAR
Banaue cor. N. Roxas Sts., Quezon City
- Free iced tea and dessert

ELITE SEAFOOD AND RESTAURANT
1690 Gen. Malvar cor. J. Bocobo Sts., Malate
- 10% discount and free dessert

ENCORE! ENCORE! KARAOKE CENTER
SM Megamall and SM North EDSA
- 10% discount on food and drinks (not applicable to promos)

EUROPA DELICATESSEN
F. Ramos St., Cebu City
- 5% discount

FEDERAL SEAFOOD RESTAURANT
6754 Ayala Ave., Allied Bank Center,
2/F Car Park Bldg., Makati City
- 10% discount on total bill and free dessert or free noodles for every set menu

FIREPLACE SEAFOODS GRILL
Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
- Free iced tea

FIRST VIENNA KAFFEE HAUS
88 Manioz Plaza, Mango Ave., Cebu City
- 5% discount

GALLERY LOUNGE (Heritage Hotel)
Roxas Blvd., cor. EDSA
- 10% discount on food and beverage for a minimum bill of P1 000

GREEN POND GARDEN RESTAURANT
F. Halili Ave., Bagbagin, Sta. Maria, Bulacan
- Get a free Coke in can for every P300 food purchase

HEMINGWAY'S AFRICANA RESTAURANT BAR AND CIGAR LOUNGE
2/F 1903 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

HUATING (Heritage Hotel)
Roxas Blvd., cor. EDSA
- 10% discount on food and beverage for a minimum bill of P1 000

IN THE MOOD BALLROOM DANCING MALATE
2/F 1900 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

ITALDELI
1009 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City
- 5% discount on total bill

JADE GARDEN
Greenbelt Mall, Makati City
- Free small order of Szechuan Shrimp for a minimum food purchase of P1,500 (a la carte only)

LAS PAELLAS DE ALBA
55 Timog Ave., Quezon City
- Free appetizer or dessert

LARRY'S BAR
3/F 1900 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

LOLO DAD'S CAFÉ
899 President Quirino Ave., Malate, Manila
- Free dessert

MA-TSU (Heritage Hotel)
Roxas Blvd., cor. EDSA
- 10% discount on food and beverage for a minimum bill of P1 000

PORT SEAFOODS
Waterfront Hotel, Lahug, Cebu
- 5% discount

SHUFFLES
116 B Sct. Lozano cor. Tomas Morato Sts., Quezon City
- Free Shuffles iced tea

STARS BAR AND DINING
G/F Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City
- 10% discount on food and beverage

STONEGRILL BAR AND RESTAURANT
- Complimentary dessert for a minimum charge of P500

STRUMM'S
El Pueblo Real de Manila, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
- 15% discount on total food and beverage bill
- Free entrance on Fridays (maximum of 2 per group)

STRUMM'S
Jupiter St., Bel-Air Village, Makati City
- 15% discount on total food and beverage bill
- Free entrance on Fridays (maximum of 2 per group)

SUMMIT BAR
Davao City
- Free entrance except on special shows

THE RIVIERA (Heritage Hotel)
Roxas Blvd., cor. EDSA
- 10% discount on food and beverage for a minimum bill of P1 000

TIYA NENA'S
Ayala Center
- 5% discount

DEPARTMENT STORE

ROBINSON'S DEPARTMENT STORE
All branches
- Free T-shirt for a minimum purchase of P1,000

HOTELS/RESORTS

ALEGRE BEACH RESORT
Cebu
- 50% discount on published room rates

APO VIEW HOTEL
Davao City
- 30% discount on published room rates
- 10% discount on food and beverage

BARCELO ROYAL MANDAYA HOTEL
Davao City
- 50% discount on published room rates
- 10% discount on food and beverage except for The Summit

CEBU MARINE BEACH RESORT
Suba Basbas, Mangindon, Lapu Lapu City
- 10% discount on food and drinks and room rates

CEBU MIDTOWN HOTEL
Fuente Osmeña
- 5% discount on food only

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J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao
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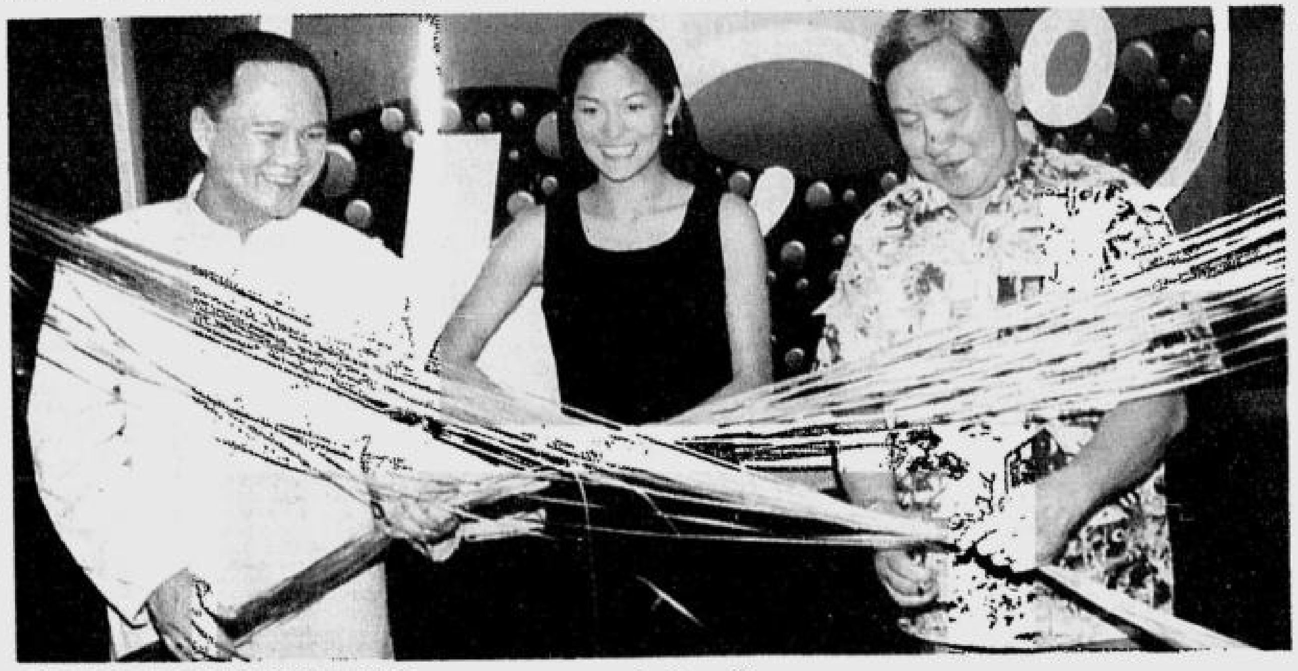
G/F, Narra Bldg., 2276 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City
- 10% discount

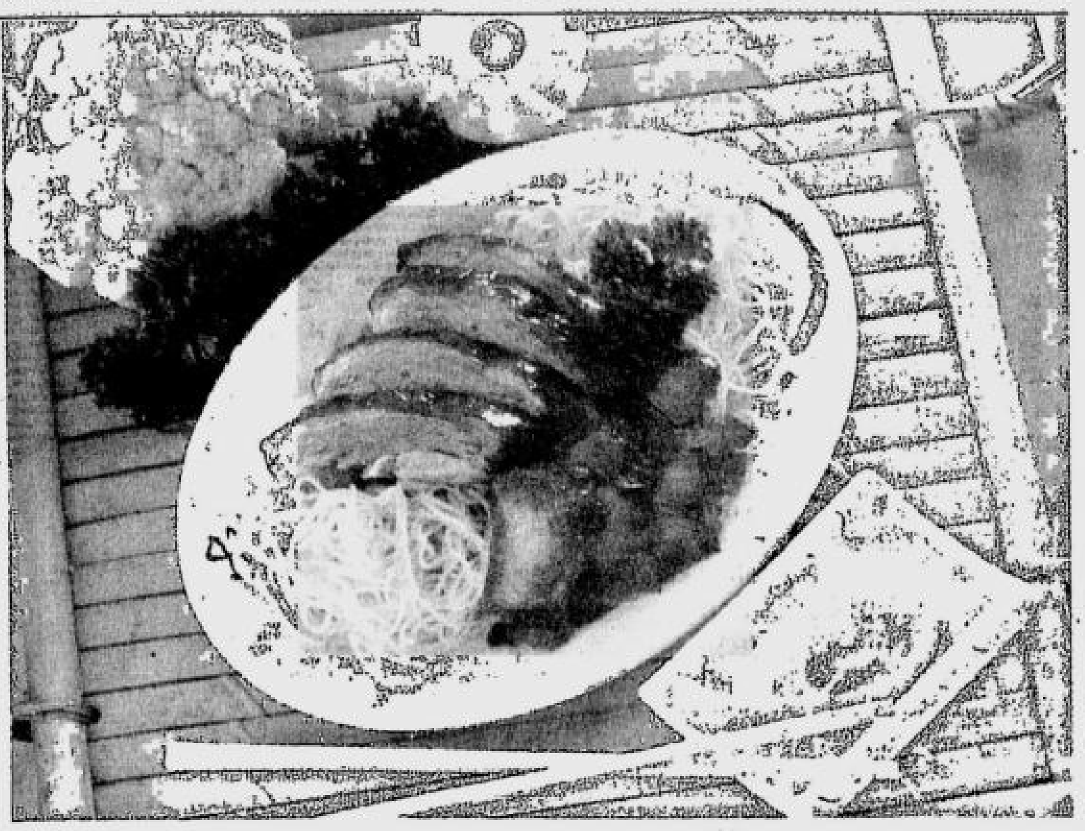
PATRIX CUSTOM SHOP TAILOR AND TEXTILE
1026 A. Arnaiz Ave., Makati City
- 10% discount on non-sale items

TOYOTA CUBAO AND MANILA BAY
- 10% discount on parts and services

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0388, series of 2001.



GRAND OPENING OF H2O
BB. Pilipinas-Universe title-holder Miriam Quiambao, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Grand American Food Inc.'s George Pua share honors during the H2O Bar & Restaurant's ribbon-cutting at SM City Manila, upper ground floor.



AUTHENTIC Peking roasted duck slices with pork *asado* served with homemade noodles

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Peking duck, the traditional way

ROASTING a Peking duck is an art. It can only be done by a well-trained "roaster." This inspired the owners of Tiong Kee Inc. to open Tiong Kee Roast Duck House last May.

Tiong Kee prides itself in being the first restaurant in the country to serve this authentic Chinese gourmet fare. The dish is prepared by a bona fide Hong Kong chef named James Ko, who has studied in Hong Kong's renowned roasting school, the Tick Fat Roasting School. He had also worked in one of Hong Kong's popular fine-dining restaurants, the Kau Kee Restaurant. Filipino chef Ramon Vijar assists him.

Roasted in the traditional way, Tiong Kee's Peking Roasted Duck proves its authenticity in look, texture and taste. The color of the skin is uniformly reddish. The meat looks and tastes crispy. It is succulent and tender, with only a very thin layer of fat—a mark of a good-quality Peking Duck.

But the real test of authenticity of a Peking Duck is the dipping sauce. Tiong Kee serves Sweet Plum Sauce. Other restaurants serve only Hoisin sauce..

Tiong Kee also offers famous authentic Hong Kong dishes such as Roasted Pork Asado ("char shiu"), Chicken-Feet, and special soups. Chef Ko says that to make a great soup, one must never scrimp on bones. Every morning, he goes to the butcher shop to buy huge quantities of beef, pork and chicken bones.

Tong Kee also makes its own noodles, which are firmer and more flavorful than the standard noodles served in many Chinese restaurants. Chef Ko says their noodles have dried shrimp roe (only available in Hong Kong).

Tiong Kee also serves an array of dimsums, congee and special mixed rice toppings and noodles. Odelon Llamera Esquierda heads the dimsum department. He recommends the Chicken Siomai and Roast Duck Siopao, the house specialty.

Tiong Kee has two branches—at 834 Banawe St. and Del Monte Ave., Quezon City, and at the food court of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta.

Are you ready for Dutch cheese?

GOUDA is a mild curd cheese of Dutch origin similar to Edam.

Every year since 1997, dairy cooperatives in Mindanao and the Dairy Foundation have produced Gouda using traditional technology under the supervision of a Dutch cheese expert. The cheese is all natural, made from 100 percent cow's milk. It is carefully aged in a ripening room with controlled temperature and humidity to give the original texture and taste of world-class Gouda.

Gouda cheese under the brand name Queso de Oro is distributed by the Dairy Foundation. The product is on exhibit and for sale at the "Legacy 2001 Celebrates with a Discovery Tour" at The Pen.

FIGARO
FROST

SPECIALTY BREWS
The Figaro Coffee Company has become a popular hang-out because of its coffee specialties and cozy ambience. Figaro's great blends—cappuccinos, espressos, flavored coffees, as well as teas, frosts, and smoothies—keep customers coming back. Pastas, sandwiches and delectable desserts complement Figaro's fine beverages. Figaro Coffee Company is on the 22/L North Wing, SM City Manila.

40 cloves of garlic liven up this young cook's kitchen

BY VANGIE BAGA-REYES
PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

TRISSA Lopez is young, hip and full of energy. At 26, she has traveled abroad, gone to various rage parties, eaten at the trendiest restaurants in town and what-have-you. But she can also be serious in life, if need be. In fact, her job at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. calls for full concentration on the treasury department and capital markets.

But when she's out of the office, she goes back to savoring the joys of life. Her latest passions are baking and cooking.

Trissa had an early start in baking. When she was in her teens, she baked chocolate chip cookies for many summers with sisters Tina and Milou and brother Nito to earn additional pocket money.

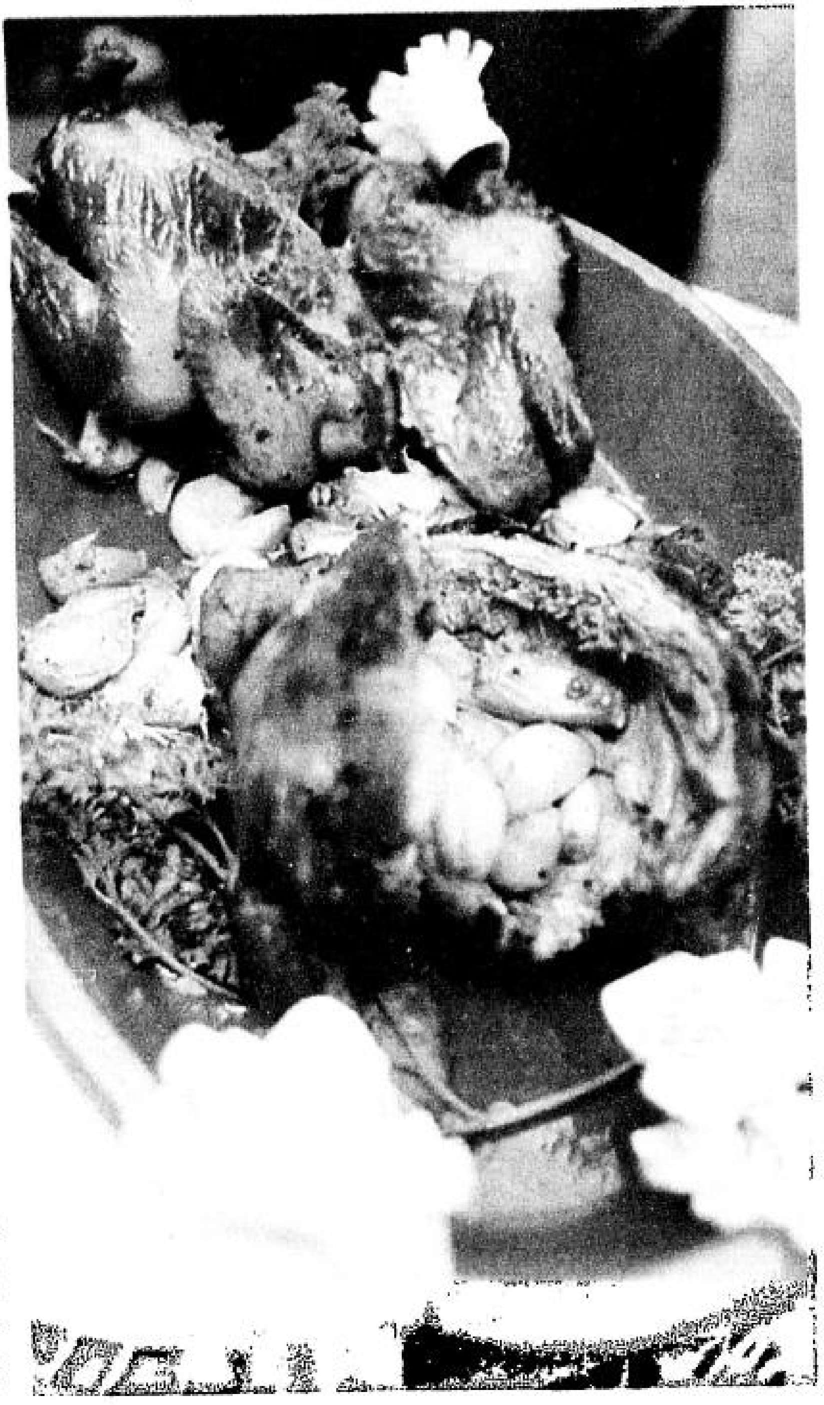
PRIVATE SPECIALTY

She later moved on to a higher level, expanding her sweets roster to include chocolate mousse, all sorts of cheesecakes, quiche, chocolate celebration (a chocolate cake with chocolate sauce that oozes out when sliced), crepes, bread pudding, blackforest and pannacotta. Her most recent kitchen claim to fame is the strawberry shortcake with chocolate, a delicious creamy cake with fresh strawberry fillings and toppings. A better version of almond brittle torte, it definitely melts in your mouth after every bite.

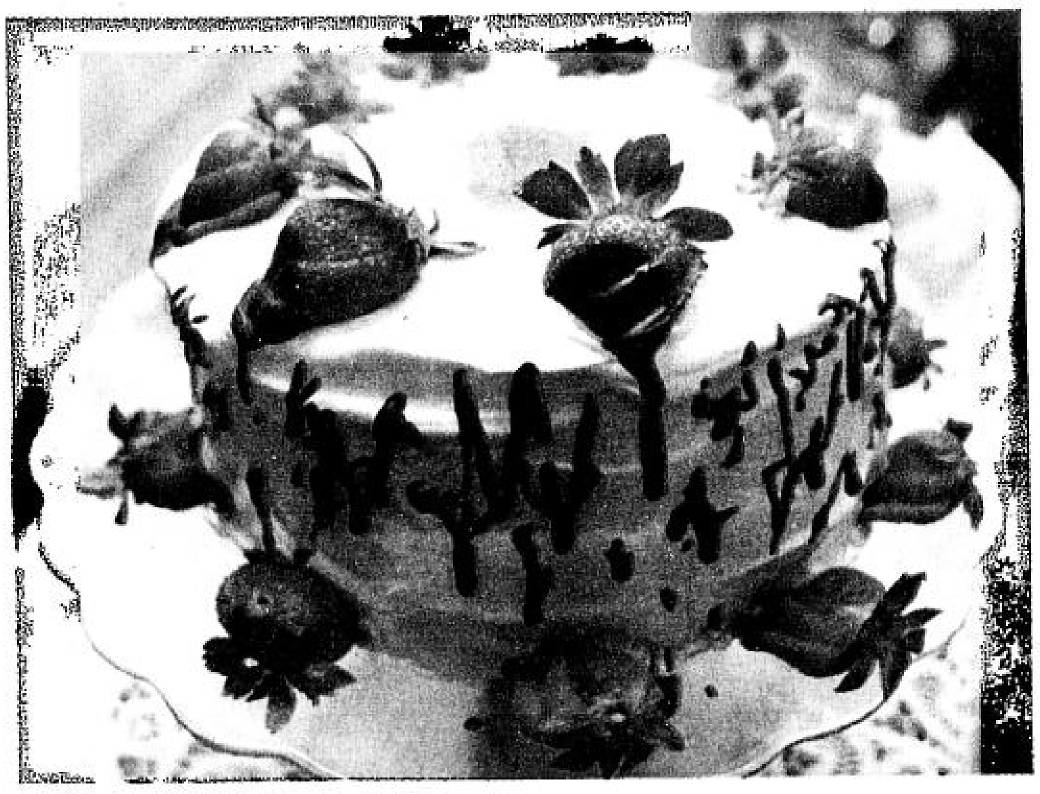
Trissa can also whip up Spanish, Italian, Mediterranean and other continental dishes, but she loves Spanish cuisine the best. Her recent discovery (also the family favorite) is Pollo con Cuarenta Ajos or chicken with 40 cloves of garlic. She uses rock cornish hens and heaps of garlic. But, hey, don't be turned off by the garlic's pungent taste and smell. "Many people have the misconception that garlic is a very strong ingredient," says Trissa. "But garlic is only strong when you slice it, dice it or crush it. When you bake it, it's more subtle." This dish is ideal for parties and special gatherings.

Trissa's chicken with 40 cloves of garlic gives a different twist to roast chicken. The garlic provides substance, zest and character to the good old chicken. The garlic cloves and other spices, such as oregano, onion, celery and bay leaves are tucked inside the chicken breast and baked.

The talent for cooking runs in the family. Trissa's grandmother, Lourdes Perez del Rosario is the matriarch and founder of El Comedor Restaurant. "I actually learned the Pollo con Cuarenta Ajos from my grandmother. Like my mom (Marilen del Rosario-Lopez), she loves to pass on her expertise to us," says Trissa, who usually showcases her food creations during the family's Sunday get-together at her grandmother's house.



CHICKEN with 40 Cloves of Garlic



STRAWBERRY Shortcake with Chocolate

Trissa loves to experiment with recipes during weekends. To enhance her cooking skills, Trissa dreams of going abroad to study cooking for a year. "If and when I get a one-year vacation leave from my job, why not?" she quips. "But I love my job as a banker and cooking on the side adds more fun to my work." *(If you want to try Trissa's specialties, call El Comedor at 892-5071, 893-2518 or 852-4995)*

Chicken with 40 Cloves of Garlic

40 cloves garlic, large, cloves halved
13 sprigs fresh oregano
1 large yellow onion, peeled and cut into ¼-inch half moons
1 rib celery cut into 1/4-inch crescents
2 dried bay leaves
3 small chickens
3 lemons, cut into quarters lengthwise
¼ c dry white wine
½ to 1 c homemade chicken stock, or canned low-sodium chicken broth, skimmed of fat
1½ tsp unsalted butter, melted

Heat oven to 425°F. Cut six cloves of garlic crosswise into very thin slices. Set aside in a small bowl. In another small bowl, set aside 12 cloves. Pick leaves from three or four sprigs oregano, and set aside in a small bowl. Place remaining garlic cloves and oregano, onion, celery and bay leaves in the bottom of a medium nonstick roasting pan.

With your finger, gently loosen the skin on the breast of the chicken. Gently slide a few garlic slices and a few oregano leaves under the skin in a single layer. Place four garlic cloves, one sprig oregano and two lemon wedges in the cavity of each chicken; set aside remaining lemon wedges.

Tie each chicken's legs together with kitchen twine. Tuck wings under breast; place hens in pan over the garlic mixture. Add wine and ½ c chicken stock to pan. Brush the skin with melted butter; transfer pan to oven.

Cook, basting occasionally and adding more chicken stock to pan if dry, until golden brown and internal temperature reaches 165°F when measured with a meat thermometer, 45 to 60 minutes. Remove chickens from pan, and set aside on a board to rest five minutes before serving with reserved lemon wedges.

Strawberry Shortcake with Chocolate

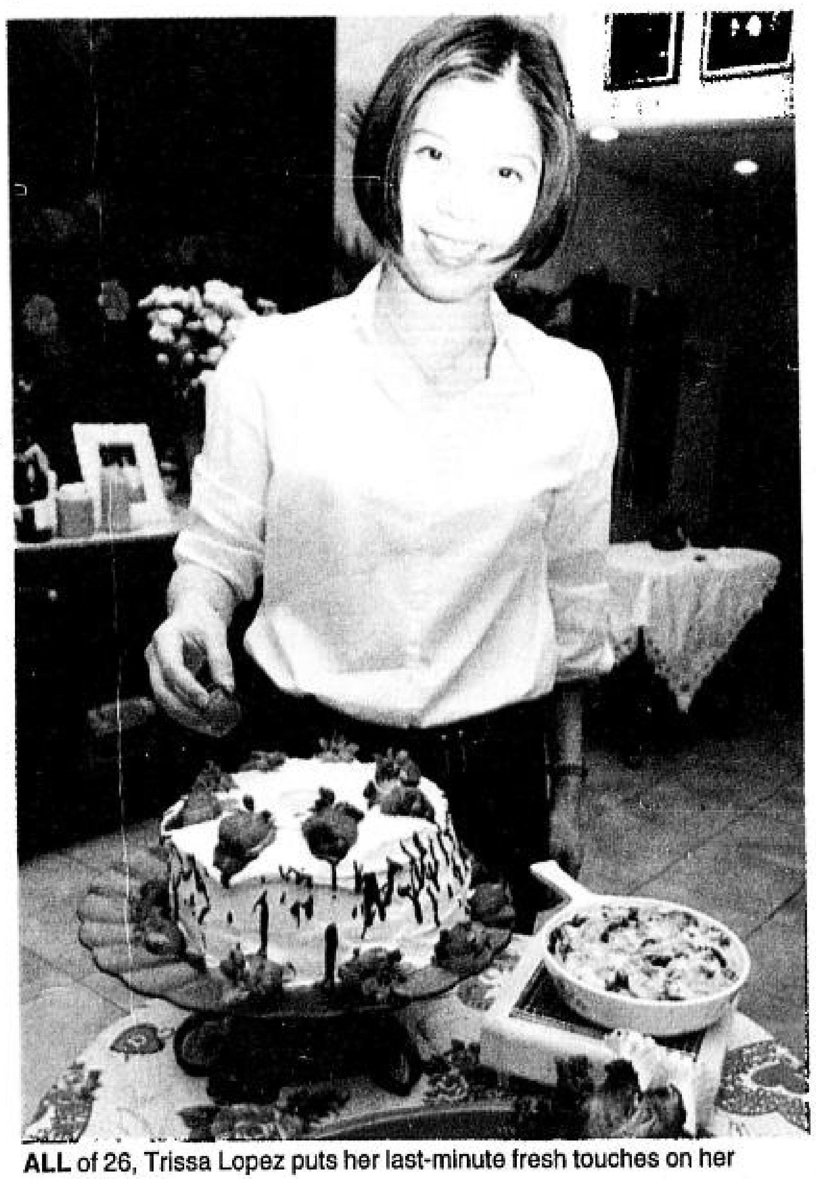
2 c all purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
1/8 tsp salt
¼ c sugar
½ c butter
1 egg lightly beaten
2/3 c evaporated milk
1½ c cream, whipped
Strawberries or any sliced fresh fruit, halved

Preheat oven to 425°F. Brush an eight-inch round cake pan with butter or oil. Coat base and side evenly with flour; shake off excess. Place flour, baking powder, salt and sugar in a large bowl. Cut in butter until coarse crumbs.

Combine egg and milk. Add to dry ingredients and stir until just moistened. Spread in prepared cake pan. Bake for 20 minutes. Turn cake out onto wire rack to cool.

Split cake horizontally using two forks. Spread the bottom half with half of the whipped cream. Place most of the halved strawberries or other sliced fresh fruit over the cream. Top with other half of cake. Spread remaining cream on top and decorate with remaining strawberries or fruit.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph



ALL of 26, Trissa Lopez puts her last-minute fresh touches on her specialty ckae.

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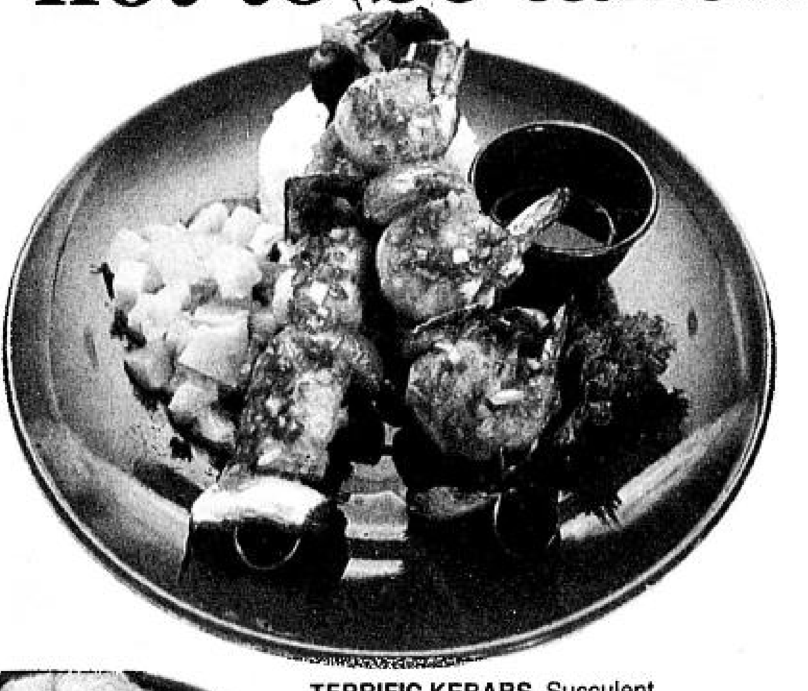
CLEAN-AIR RESTOS

A bistro not to be taken lightly

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Johnny Villena

There's a peaceful, unhurried ambiance to this place that serves Asian cuisine with a French twist

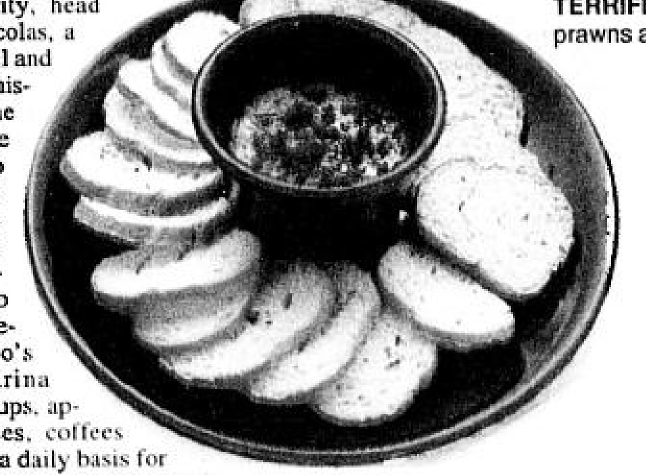


TERRIFIC KEBABS. Succulent prawns and grilled fish

ON A STRIP populated by smoky grill places and dimly lit bars, it beckons. Smoke-free and serene Light Bistro, a 30-seater, promises a reasonably priced Asian-Continental menu and an ambiance that feeds the mind and the spirit.

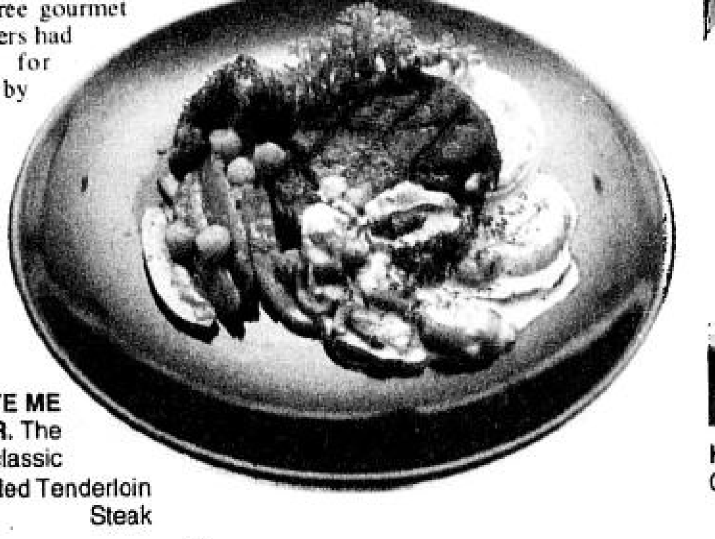
Women-powered

Trained in various fields but bound by a passion for food, the four women behind Light Bistro are full-time servants of Elim Community, a Catholic covenanted community dedicated to the Lord's service. PY Nakar, Dondi Nakar Catan and Didi Nakar Maranon, together with family friend Rissa Singson, own and operate Light Bistro. "This is just our sideline," Dondi quips.



GREAT. Crostini with Crab and Cheese Gratinee

Another friend from the Elim Community, head chef Carina Nicolas, a graduate of hotel and restaurant administration from the University of the Philippines, who took advance courses at the Los Angeles Culinary Institute, teamed up with PY to develop the Bistro's menu. Carina whipped up soups, appetizers, entrées, coffees and deserts on a daily basis for two-and-a-half months in PY's kitchen and hosted weekly dinners for family and friends to sample the dishes and evaluate them. For getting a free gourmet dinner, diners had to "pay" for their meals by meticulously filling up an evaluation sheet per dish.



LOVE ME TENDER. The Bistro's classic Broiled Tenderloin Steak

Prior to their foray into the restaurant business, the five ladies had been involved in a catering business since 1995. However, they decided to take the leap from the catering business to the restaurant scene in pursuit of a vision. "We believe that the mission of Christian hospitality was placed in our hearts by God. So there's no other way to concretize our dream but to put up a restaurant," Didi relates.

KITCHEN WIZARD. Head chef Carina Nicolas

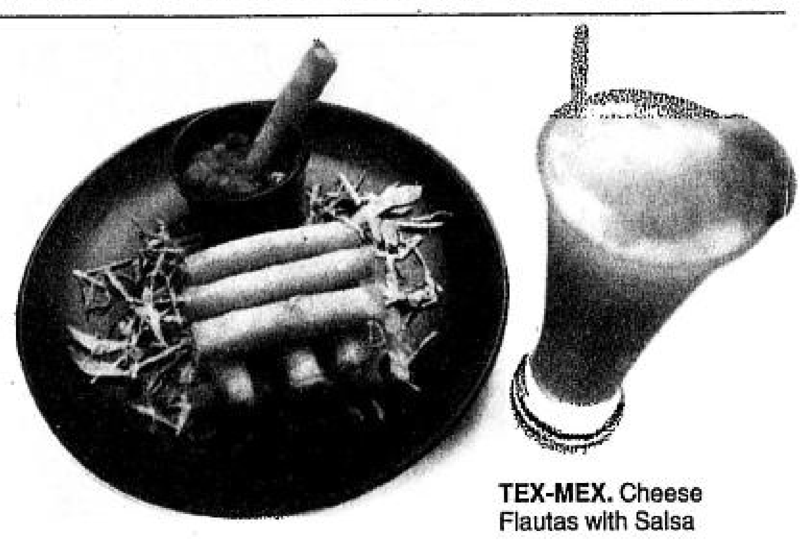
HEAVENLY. Apple Crumble à la mode.

A visit to Light Bistro is both a gustatory and refreshing experience. White walls, clean lines and cove lights create a cozy atmosphere conducive for long lunches with old friends. In the evenings, muted lighting radiates from halogen pin lights that dot the ceiling and tea lights that gently flicker on tables, creating a serene, romantic ambiance. Inspiring photo illustrations, created by PY, hang on the walls. Adding to the peaceful, unhurried ambiance of the restaurant is the Christian music. Light Bistro's no-smoking policy (step out on the small balcony if you need to smoke) assures its patrons of an unpolluted setting.

Originally designed and handcrafted furniture in *tanguile* wood lends both simplicity and elegance to the place. China in bistro blue is soothing to the eyes and Roman blinds on the front window, also in blue, add to the coolness that calms the customers.

Excellent

The best part about this Bistro is the food that can simply be described as excellent. The menu is comprised of entrées that are a fusion of Asian and Continental flavors. "We wanted to be based on the traditional French style of cooking, but we also wanted to throw in ingredients available to us in the local market."



TEX-MEX. Cheese Flautas with Salsa

FOUR women and a bistro

High quality food at reasonable prices is Light Bistro's dictum. "We don't scrimp on ingredients. Everything we use is fresh," Didi emphasizes. Being a Christian restaurant though, there are no alcoholic beverages here but the Ponkan Shake or Light Bistro Lemonade is a healthy and sure-fire treat.

A meal at Light Bistro is a gastronomic thrill from start to finish. Begin lunch or dinner with Crostini with Crab and Cheese Gratinee—thinly sliced toasted French bread with crab meat and a mixture of parmesan, cream cheese and white cheddar cheese. An alternative would be Tex-Mex Flautas—white cheddar cheese with a sliver of jalapeño pepper in *lumpia* wrapper served with Fresh Tomato Salsa. For your greens, the Chinese Chicken Salad, composed of sliced chicken breast, fried rice noodles and lettuce, served with Oriental dressing, is a runaway hit. Main entrée choice selections are Seafood Kebab (a combination of grilled fish and prawns marinated in herbs, served with a tasty Mango Salsa), the Roasted Herbed Chicken with Mushroom Sauce (breast of chicken stuffed with puréed fresh mushroom with herbs and spices) and classic Broiled Tenderloin Steak served with either Bearnaise or Mushroom Sauce.

To end a meal, there is Apple Crumble à la Mode or the house specialty, Peaches with Lemon Cream on Walnut Meringue (four layers of walnut sooo crunchy you can actually bite into the walnut with peaches and lemon cream filling). Team that up with a Caramel Machiatto, a coffee lovers dream.

Enlighten your tastebuds at this haven of good food, and soothe your soul as well.

Light Bistro, located at 223 Katipunan Ave. (tel. 421-0640), is open from Mondays to Saturdays for lunch and dinner.

E-mail the author at cbguballa @inquirer.com.ph

A new rage called Raj

It's an Indian restaurant that's more cosmopolitan than ethnic. The Indian touches are reflected in the use of vivid colors and resplendent beadwork; the menu has familiar favorites

(From page C1)

get a first-hand experience in cookery, he went to London where there's a huge population of Indians. London is to the Indians what California is Filipinos. He was told that Indian food in London was more acceptable to international tastes, plus the fact that restaurant standards were exacting.

Montano repudiated misconceptions that Indian cuisine was pungent and hot. On the contrary, there are similarities between Filipino and Indian food such as the use of coconut in viands, milk powder in sweets, the mixture of tastes, dishes with sauces complemented with fragrant rice. If the Filipinos have the local Paella and Arroz à la Cubana, India has its *biryani* or long-grained rice with meat or the *pulau*, vegetable pilaf.

Feng shui-friendly

Montano and three silent partners got an apartment hidden inside Ma. Orosa Street. Designer Jim Tan converted it into a modern restaurant with subtle touches of India. The driveway leading to the restaurant was converted into a bamboo arcade enlivened by *stupa* (traditionally a pile of earth marking a sacred spot) and candle lanterns.

In deference to feng shui, Tan built a fountain arch between the front door and the driveway. According to geomancy, the *chi* or positive energy would escape if the exit were in front of the door. The fountain arch resembles the famous India Gates in Delhi. It blocks the *chi* so that prosperity is kept within the restaurant.

Tan explained that the interior design is a combination of minimalism and Indian ornamentation. The restaurant exemplifies modernity in the use of concrete, glass, aluminum and stainless steel, straight clean lines, restrained ornamentation and geometric shapes. Instead of Hollywood songs, jazz and world music waft the air.

The Indian touches are reflected in the use of vivid colors such as copper, pink, orange and violet; references to temples; and resplendent beadwork. The niches in the back bar were inspired by the temple architecture. The booths are decorated with prints of the Kama Sutra, framed in frosted glass and lit by aluminum lighting. The fluorescent lighting highlights the purple moiré upholstery. Another *stupa* was built to hide the restroom, which is interestingly adorned with beaded curtains, made from turnazul, pearls and gold beads, reflecting the Indian opulence. The marble with touches of pink was imported from India. The mirror, which was also India-inspired, is framed with silver plate.

RESTAURATEUR DJ Montano introduces a hip concept in Malate.

Play on surfaces

On the second floor, Montano introduces a new dining concept—eating on low tables and square tools. This was a take on how people in India and Middle East squat on the floor to have their meals. The low tables are made of varnished woods and accented with aluminum trims and matched with cubed stools. The walls are a play on surface treatments such as rough concrete finishes and special glass.

A beaded swag, edged with pearls and bone carvings, separates one dining area and the gazebo, which accommodates eight diners. Blue is the predominant color in this area. Tan makes a pun of Diana Vreeland's aphorism "Pink is the navy blue of India." This is the most luxurious area as it is thrown in with huge silk and moiré pillows encrusted with beadwork and trimming.

Instead of gilt rooms, which are common in Indian décor, Tan uses silver leaf to paint a private room. The padded walls are made of cutwork and highlighted by Nepalese medallions with turquoise. For ambience, the place is lit with indirect cove lighting. Halogen lights are focused on the tables.

Montano hired caterer Debbie Enriquez and her partner Martha Lovina to design the menu and the food presentation. Enriquez lived in Singapore, which is a melting pot of Asian cuisines.

Vegetarian choices

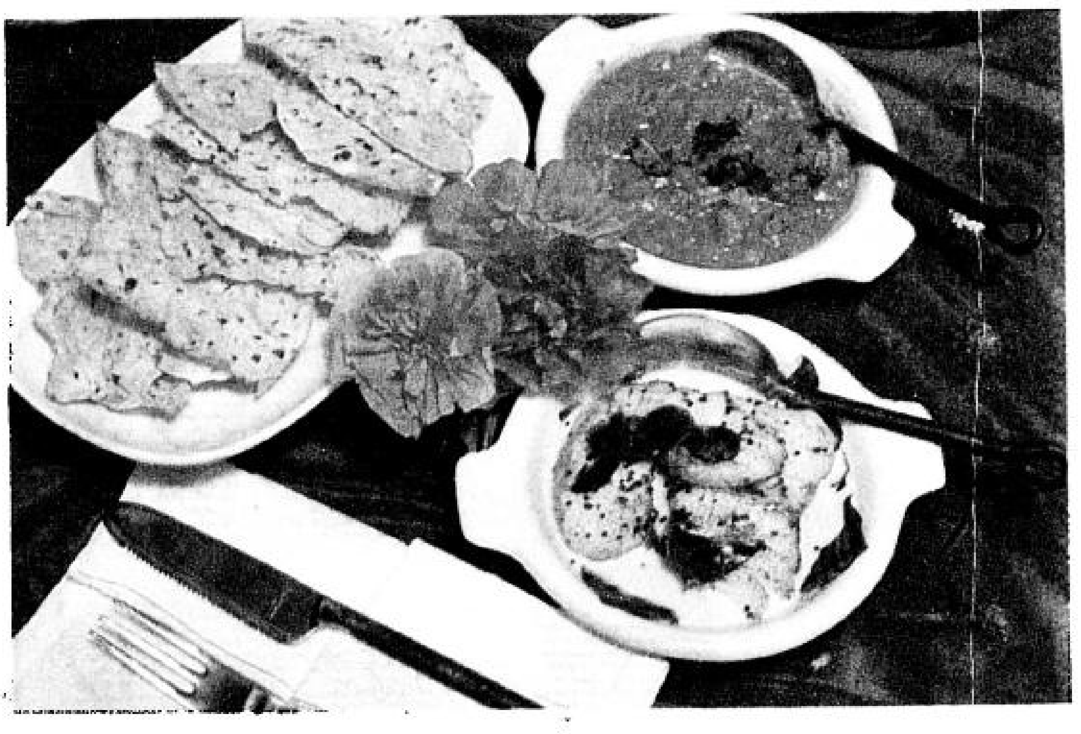
Raj doesn't specialize in regional cuisine. The menu has familiar favorites—if you're used to Indian food. The service is continental. For instance, in India and the Middle East, the unleavened breads are normally served with the viands because they're used to scoop the foods. Here the flatbreads, accompanied by mango chutney, are served before the meals. Raj has the variety—the popular naan which is baked in a *tandoori* oven, *puris* or deep-fried cornmeal rounds, *rava iddlis* or steamed rice cakes (in Gujarat province they go well with cilantro), the staple *chapati* and *pappadam*, India's version of spicy, fried crackers.

Normally, Indians eat the *chapati* with spiced potato cubes and eggplant curry.

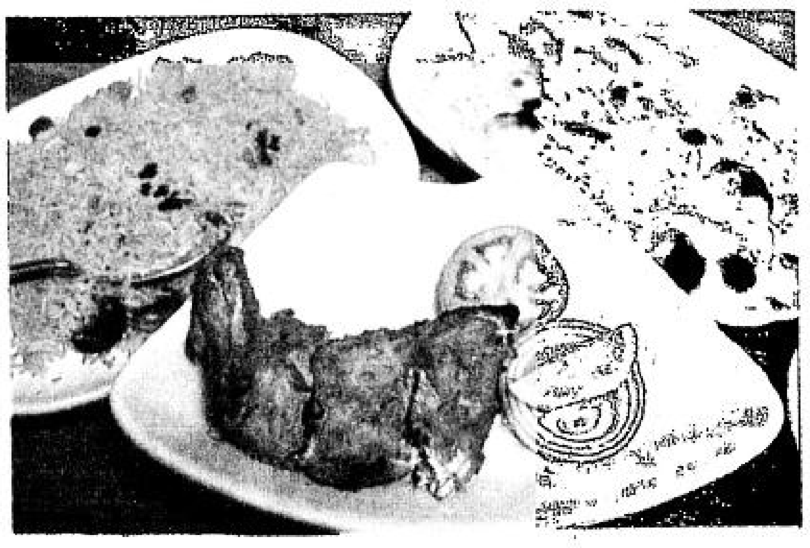
Chutneys are served the traditional way, in a round steel box with little containers of chutneys made from mango, mint and grated coconut.

The rice plates are a colorful and flavorful array with meats, vegetables, big cashews, sultanas and saffron. You get a protein lift with accompanying bean dishes made from lentils and chickpeas.

DINING al fresco at the Raj is more Western than Indian.



PAPPADAM (fried crackers), Lapu-lapu Fillet and Chickpea Stew



SAFFRON *basmati* (long-grain rice) with cashews and sultanas, chicken *tandoori* and naan (flatbread)

If you're entertaining vegetarian friends, Raj has some dishes such as the eggplant curry with like curry, mustard greens and white radish, the famous mattar paneer or fried Indian cheese with peas and tomatoes, Gujarati potatoes with cucumber and yogurt dip, stewed chickpeas, okra curry and spinach puree. A favorite is the vegetable and homemade cheese *tandoori* that's dry and firm. It goes well with the subtle tastes of the chutneys.

In any Indian restaurant the predictable best sellers are the classic *roghan josh* or lamb in yogurt gravy and *dhansak* or lamb cooked Indian style. If you don't like spicy food, Montano recommends the butter chicken *tandoor*, made of cubed chicken that's stir-fried in clarified butter flavored in cardamon, cinnamon and herbs. The *meen molee* or lapu-lapu fillet simmered in coconut milk is another choice.

Tea in shot glass

The desserts are just enough to wash the taste buds. The carrot *halvah* is made from almonds, fine flour, milk powder and clarified butter. The famous *khulfi* or Indian ice cream is flavored with pistachios and almonds.

The *chai* or tea with milk and spices, is served in shot glasses instead of small teacups. Raj even offers India's famous pop lemon drink Limca. The prices of the entrees range from P110 to P440. If you want something exotic, give the restaurant a two-day notice for the raan, baked whole leg of lamb with nuts. There are platters for two that cost P880 to P980.

Raj has been operating for a month and business has been good. On a busy night, Raj is filled with expats and Filipinos who have adventurous tastes. This restaurant's concept works because it's cosmopolitan.

Raj Restaurant, located at 1820 Ma. Orosa St., Malate (tel. 525-4858), is open in the evenings.

E-mail the author at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph.

Ayala Life Assurance, Inc.

Reaching new heights in the life insurance industry.

A bright, dynamic and exciting year is in store for Ayala Life Assurance, Inc. For 2001, Ayala Life has lined up a host of programs designed to provide Filipinos with financial security and protection as well as broader benefits and chances for career advancement for their business partners.

Read on as Ayala Insurance Companies President Alfonso L. Salcedo, Jr. and Ayala Life Marketing Director Anthony Parungao share their insights, new developments and directions for Ayala Life.

A-life for life! Anthony Parungao, Ayala Life Marketing Director(leftmost) with his cheering squadron during the recent sales rally held at the Virgin Café, Ayala Center, Makati.

How will you assess Ayala Life today?

Alfonso L. Salcedo, Jr. (ALS): Ayala Life is now a stronger, leaner company. We have successfully lowered the costs of doing business and injected renewed sales and marketing vigor into the organization. We are better poised to compete more aggressively in the life insurance industry.

What do you think are the strengths of Ayala Life?

ALS: Being an Ayala company gives us a huge advantage because of its strong, trustworthy name. And, with BPI's 150 years of banking expertise and extensive network backing us up, we now have a strong banking presence to help us reach out to more customers and develop more innovative products that our business partners could easily market.

How's the local life insurance industry and how can a life insurance company stand out from the rest?

ALS: We see a bright future for the local life insurance industry. Even during times of crises, the industry always manages to post gains. For an insurance company to stand out from the rest, we believe it must have strong disciplines in sales, customer service and marketing. A company should also be able to package and communicate the benefits of its products in an excellent way.

How vital are your business partners or intermediaries in terms of making Ayala Life ready and dominant in the future as it is today?

ALS: Our business partners will always be very critical in our organization. We believe the traditional distribution force will be around for a long time.

That's why we see to it that we provide them with the best career-income opportunities and superior products to make their profession one that is very fulfilling.

Rah, rah, rah! Whopping it up after hearing about the new A-line products.

We are in fact honoring our top business partners tonight at the Westin Philippine Plaza via the Achievement Awards Night. Through this event, we truly recognize the exemplary efforts exerted by our business partners toward constantly making Ayala Life among the industry leaders.

What training programs are currently in place for your business partners and which ones are you planning to develop in the future?

Anthony Parungao (AP): We have invested in cutting-edge training programs designed to enrich their career experience and better equip them in their line of work. One is modular training, where we use an easier mentor-based training framework as opposed to the instructor-based training.

Second, we have audio-video training modules. We also have a rewards-based program where agents are recognized and rewarded for improving levels of competency and efficiency. Finally, we are now developing modules set in digital format which can be downloaded from the company website.

What are the career opportunities presently available in Ayala Life today and will there be new opportunities in the future?

AP: Definitely there will be a lot of opportunities in store for those who will become part of our agency force. We plan to expand our agency force and include at least a thousand more into our organization. Ayala Life can offer the best career opportunities because of its strong brand name, competitive products and superior compensation package.

In general, Filipinos are hesitant to buy insurance policies. How has Ayala Life been addressing this scenario?

ALS: Most Filipinos don't have access to insurance services so they don't fully understand the products. We are addressing this situation by constantly increasing our sales force to reach a broader market and training our agents well to enable them to sell our products properly. And of course, by tapping into BPI's large customer base.

AP: I don't think Filipinos are hesitant about getting an insurance policy. They need to be informed about it more. An insurance product is a present cost for a future need so it takes a lot of discernment to fulfill today what is actually a future need. We need to make them see the urgency of the value of life insurance services.

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Ayala Life rallies for a more secure future for Filipino families.

Ayala Life kicks off 2001 with sales rallies and product launches nationwide. Centers of activity were successive rallies and launches held at the Glorietta, Ayala Center in Makati, Holiday Inn Mimosa in Pampanga and in the city of Cagayan de Oro.

Pres. ... Salcedo ... Joe ...
VP Anthony Parungao, Participants and Guests
AYALA LIFE VISMIN SALES KICK-OFF 2001
1:30 p.m. Feb. 16, 2001 · LAUREMAR RESORT
OPOL, CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY (MISAMIS ORIENTAL)

Mindanao...Mindanao... Members of Ayala Life Vismin sales force doing an ethnic dance number during the Vismin kickoff.

At Ayala Center, chanting the afternoon's theme, "A-Life for Life!" program host and Ayala Life Agency Training Department Head Eric Perez led an inspirational cheer joined by its business partners who came from Northern Luzon, South Luzon, North Metro and South Metro. Perez, along with Grace Guevarra, Ayala Life Senior Manager for Business and Research, also did a presentation which served to underline the company's thrust at providing Filipinos with the "A-Life."

Getting into the Groove. South Luzon General Manager Joe Montino on the dancefloor with international star Jenine Desiderio who performed during the kickoff in Ayala Center, Makati..

Ayala Insurance Companies President Alfonso L. Salcedo Jr. inspired all business partners to do their best by saying, "We must rebuild the nation by committing ourselves to do our best for the betterment of our families."

He encouraged everyone to focus more closely on achieving this goal. Salcedo added that this is very important since the family has always been everyone's source of motivation and inspiration.

The event also served to recognize Ayala Life's business partners who have consistently shown exemplary performance. Lestie Fronteras, Ayala Life Marketing Services Manager announced the top achievers who will represent Ayala Life in the 6th Asia Pacific Life Insurance Congress in Bangkok, Thailand on May 4 to 7 this year.

The trip to Thailand, according to Ayala Life Sales Director Joe Ferreria is proof that dreams do come true, especially for hardworking individuals. "It always pays to live out your dream, make them come true because you can never tell what will happen next," Ferreria reminded the business partners.

With Ayala Life's new range of insurance services being sold by an inspired group of business partners, more and more Filipino families would have class-A insurance services within reach..

Living the A-Life: Going places with Ayala Life.

How would you describe the A-Life? It's a life where you have a very fulfilling profession that provides you with excellent high-income opportunities which in turn enables you to be a certified globetrotter and at the same time gives you the power to enjoy a first-rate lifestyle---a new car, a new home, the works.

Thailand, here we come! Ayala Life top achievers who will be attending the 6th Asia Pacific LifeInsurance Congress, with Alfonso "Yogi" Salcedo, Jr. and Vice President and Director for Sales Joe Ferreria (extreme left).

This is exactly the life enjoyed by top business partners of Ayala Life Assurance, Inc. And aside from enjoying the advantage of selling first-rate and innovative life insurance products, Ayala Life provides its business partners with an abundance of career opportunities that is widely considered to be the best in the industry.

Ayala Life's business partners enjoy high commission rates and superior benefits packages including persistency bonuses.

What's more, there are a number of competency development programs like the mentor-based program that is agent-initiated, graduated, incentive driven, which encourages the growth of each business partner.

Ayala Life further prides itself in developing the industry's first Sales Managers Advancement and Recruitment Training (SMART) Programs. This is a set of programs that include seminars on the fundamentals of sales management and a scholarship program. There are also electronic based training courses that give business partners greater access to every essential training tool they require.

Ayala Life also hosts quarterly forums designed to help their business partners gain insight into a number of relevant topics. The objective of this is to better equip them in facing the challenges at hand.

More importantly, Ayala Life constantly recognizes the efforts of its top performers by honoring them in the annual achievement awards. This year, more than 40 of Ayala Life's business partners will receive the tribute they deserve plus a trip to Bangkok, Thailand where they will represent Ayala Life in the 6th Asia Pacific Life Insurance Congress from May 4 to 7.

The congress will enable them to hobnob with industry leaders and hone their skills to help them absorb all the tricks of the trade. As usual, things can only get better: Ayala Life's next batch of top business partners will go on a trip abroad to scenic Switzerland.

So you see, living the A-Life doesn't have to be that hard to experience. Just ask any Ayala Life business partner.

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MESSAGES

One of the key ingredients to an insurance company's success is that it must have a group of talented, resourceful and dedicated people who are willing to consistently give their all out service to their customers and clients. Ayala Life Assurance, Inc. clearly proves that it has this key ingredient as it pays tribute to its outstanding business partners through its Awards Night. This event is truly a remarkable gesture of Ayala Life as it continues to recognize the pivotal role of business partners toward the advancement of the local insurance industry in this new millennium and beyond.

Congratulations and *Mabuhay* to Ayala Life and to all the awardees!

Eduardo T. Malinis
Insurance Commissioner

The economic situation in our country last year was anything but rosy and yet, Ayala Life managed to post impressive gains during this period, thanks to the dedication of our business partners who belong to the best in the industry. Over the years, their desire to provide financial security and protection to Filipino families through Ayala Life's innovative insurance products remain impressively strong and steady. It is only fitting therefore, that we honor these unique individuals tonight for their exemplary efforts.

I am confident that in the coming years, Ayala Life will continue to remain an industry leader not only because of our business partners but also because of the company's newfound sales and marketing vigor, brought about by our recent merger with the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI). With all these exciting developments, Ayala Life is definitely primed to accomplish greater success in the future, providing our business partners with a wealth of opportunities for career advancement in order to sustain their inspiring drive toward achieving more.

Congratulations to all of our awardees.

Alfonso L. Salcedo, Jr.
President, Ayala Insurance Companies

Ayala Life features the latest insurance products for Filipinos.

Ayala Life Assurance, Inc. introduces a complete range of products developed to provide financial protection and security to Filipino families.

"These products aim to help the Filipino achieve his dream of a stable and secure life for his family, ensure a bright future for his children, as well as help provide financial stability, especially during the retirement years," says Ayala Insurance Companies President Alfonso L. Salcedo Jr. "We at Ayala Life firmly believe that every Filipino is entitled to live a fully accomplished life. This is what having an A-life is all about."

Ayala Life's A-line of new products are Access, Advance and Aspire.

Access is a whole life protection plan that comes in Silver, Gold, and Platinum to give Filipino individuals different options to ensure long-term financial security and protection. Access Silver is Ayala Life's most affordable whole life plan for those who seek basic life coverage. It provides cash values which can be enjoyed at the end of the third policy year. On the other hand, Access Gold is a start-up insurance plan that's perfect for young individuals who seek higher protection with a savings element.

Meanwhile businessmen, professionals and individuals who seek protection with large face amounts can avail of Access Platinum, the life insurance plan with a larger-than-industry average cash value. It also features a straight life plan that self liquidates on the 16th policy year.

For those who want guaranteed protection with a shorter investment period, Ayala Life introduces Advance. For young people who would like to secure their future within a short span of five years, Advance 5 is a participating plan that provides lifetime protection payable within a shorter payment period. For those who find the 16-year investment period too long yet consider the five-year payment too short, Ayala Life introduces an industry first: Advance 8. Like Advance 5, Advance 8 offers shorter investment periods, this time for eight years, while providing guaranteed protection. It also enables policyholders to enjoy dividends which, when left to accumulate and earn interest, allow increases in living and death benefits.

Aspire is the best way to secure the future of your children because more than an educational plan, Aspire is also a life insurance and a retirement plan. Aspire secures any child's future by guaranteeing an education fund that provides four annual cash installments, which increases by 15% beginning on the child's 17th birthday. Aspire also boasts of the Golden Savings fund, which provides the child a sizeable retirement fund which he can avail of once he reaches the age of 50. On top of these, Aspire grants lifetime insurance coverage to the beneficiary, making it the best way to ensure a bright, financially secure future for young members of the family.

Ayala Life Marketing Director Anthony Parungao says the products have been developed to meet the unique needs of individuals. "So that ultimately, they can enjoy a bright, financially sound and secure future with their families, a privilege that should be made available to every Filipino."

Rewards of the A-life!

Ayala Life proudly presents its top achievers for the year 2000.
Congratulations and *bon voyage* on your trip as delegates
to the 6th Asia Pacific Life Insurance Congress in Bangkok, Thailand!

BRANCH MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Augusto Francisco
Makati 1

AGENCY MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Ana Lisa Duran
Makati 1

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR
Ma. Loida Meimban
Kalookan

Top Producers

Ma. Loida Meimban
Kalookan

Luz Encarnacion
Binondo

Marlyn Pamplona
Kalookan

Erlinda Montelibano
Ayala Financial - Manila

Josephine Ortiz
Bulacan

Mercedes Divinagracia
Iloilo

Marilyn De Guzman
Kalookan

Michael De Quiroz
Makati 2

Sofia Cruz
Bulacan

Renato Duran
Makati 1

Esmeralda Petate
Batangas

Edwin Antonio
Makati 1

Edna Tadeo
Nueva Ecija

Erlinda Pek
Ayala Financial - Cebu

Amelita Netro
Cagayan Valley

Katherine Navarro
Makati 2

Betty Alambay
Cagayan Valley

Ma. Paz Catapang
Bacolod

Catherine de Quiroz
Makati 2

Restituto Brana
General Santos

Demetrio Villanueva Jr.
Cavite

Sarah Jean Collado
Quezon City

Rebecca Valdez
Alabang

Joaquin Rodriguez
Bacolod

Ma.Lorena Legaspi
Makati 1

Vilma Aquino
Pasig

Aimee Festejo
Makati 1

Luzviminda Galboso
Makati 1

Jason Frivaldo
Alabang

Jovenir Bataican
Cebu

Top Agency Managers

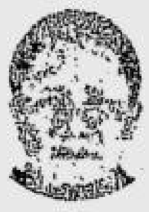
Ana Lisa Duran
Makati 1

Mary Jane Legaspi
Bacolod

Noel Pamplona
Kalookan

Ma. Loida Meimban
Kalookan

Carmelita Navarro
Makati 2


Rolando Saria
Cavite

Bartolome Solis
Alabang

Top Branch Managers

Augusto Francisco
Makati 1

Rodrigo Legaspi Jr.
Bacolod

Lourdes De Quiroz
Makati 2

Candido Babijes, Jr.
Pasig

Eduardo Angue
Cavite

Special Awardees

JZA ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
MDRT CANDIDATE
Ma. Loida Meimban
Kalookan

MDRT CANDIDATE
Allan Ramos,
Alabang

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
Marilyn De Guzman
Kalookan

TOP GROUP INSURANCE UNDERWRITER
Nanette Manulid
Ayala Financial - Davao

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Strategic alliances in Bancassurance

by Roni Tapia-Merk

A new trend in the local financial services sector has caught on.

In September last year the Monetary Board approved the proposed merger between the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) and Ayala Insurance Holdings Corporation (AIHC), thus breaking the ground for the rise of an institution that integrates banking and insurance services.

The event scarcely rated media space, but those who made it possible knew it could trigger similar mergers among banks and insurance companies in the country, with profound effects in both industries and, by extension, in the entire financial system.

In financial circles the institution thus created is known as bancassurance. It is the final, logical result of the process of convergence in bank and insurance services that has been going on for several decades now.

Look closely. People take out insurance policies with other financial products traditionally offered by banks, such as auto loans and mortgages. It thus makes a lot of sense to integrate insurance and banking services under one company. That way, the company can lower distribution cost, increase profit, and enhance overall competitiveness.

European Origin

Actually bancassurance is not a new concept. It is a new development in the Philippines, but not in Europe, where it has originated. Some of these more prominent and successful bancassurance organizations in that continent include ING (with ING Life), Credit Suisse (with Winterthur), Barclays (with Barclays Life), and Lloyds (with TSB Life and Lloyds Abbey Life).

These organizations have shown that integration of banking and insurance services as opposed to simple marketing tie-ups or strategic alliances results in a more unified vision and goals, better management of the delivery channels, and faster resolution of conflicts on transfer pricing issues.

In the local scene, tie-ups and strategic alliances, the second best thing to full integration, are common.

Manny Herbosa, Head of Ayala Bancassurance Group, welcoming guests during the Family Fun Day at the Alabang Town Center, an event hosted by Ayala Life and BPI for the bank's top clients.

Following deregulation of the insurance industry in 1995, a number of foreign insurance firms quickly established their presence here mainly through joint ventures and marketing alliances with banks hereabouts.

As a result the country is host to Solidbank and John Hancock working together, PCIBank and Cigna, Equitable Bank and Berkley International, Metrobank and AXA, RBC and Nippon Life, Security Bank and Standard Insurance, and Asian Bank and Mapfre.

It is BPI and AIHC, however, which created the first-ever bancassurance, that is, strictly speaking, the full integration of a bank and an insurance company or group of insurance companies.

Under a tie-up or marketing alliance or whatever one wishes to call it, the bank and an insurance company give each other access to their respective customer bases and distribution channels. They derive their income by splitting the financial services fees resulting from the arrangement.

In a bancassurance operation, where full integration of banking and insurance services truly exists, the company gets to identify and develop financial instruments and reconcile them for the benefit of the growing market. It can thus adopt a more competitive pricing scheme and offer more accessibility and convenience to the customer.

Customer Advantage

As in all other mergers and acquisitions, the surviving entity can expect considerable savings of a unified operation. Although banking and insurance transactions are conducted separately as they were before, both share the same company headquarters and branches, the same information technology infrastructure, the same back office support.

The bancassurance company, with its wide range of products, can thus take advantage of the so-called economies of scale.

It is not all to the advantage of the bank or the insurance company, either. Indeed, business evolves as a direct response to customer requirements and demands.

The convergence of banking and insurance services means the customer has to deal with only one service provider for his diverse financial needs.

Apart from the usual deposit accounts, loans and credit cards, foreign exchange, and other services traditionally provided by a banking institution, the bancassurance company also provides insurance coverage like, fire, vehicle, and casualty insurance as well as health care and pension plans for the customer.

In other words, the bancassurance company takes care of practically all financial requirements of its customers

One who looks closely at things will realize that banks and insurance companies pursue the same customers: those who have extra income to save or invest, in a bank or in an insurance company.

From that premise it is easy to see that bancassurance is here to stay.

Ayala Health Care bares Y2K Achievers

Francisco Salazar II leads the pack

Ayala Health Care, Inc., the Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) arm of the Ayala Insurance Companies, recently announced the names of its 41 awardees for the Year 2000 Search for Top Achievers. On top of the roster is Francisco Salazar II of Ayala Health Care-Iloilo who will be joined by other awardees during the annual Ayala Life Awards Night to be held tonight at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

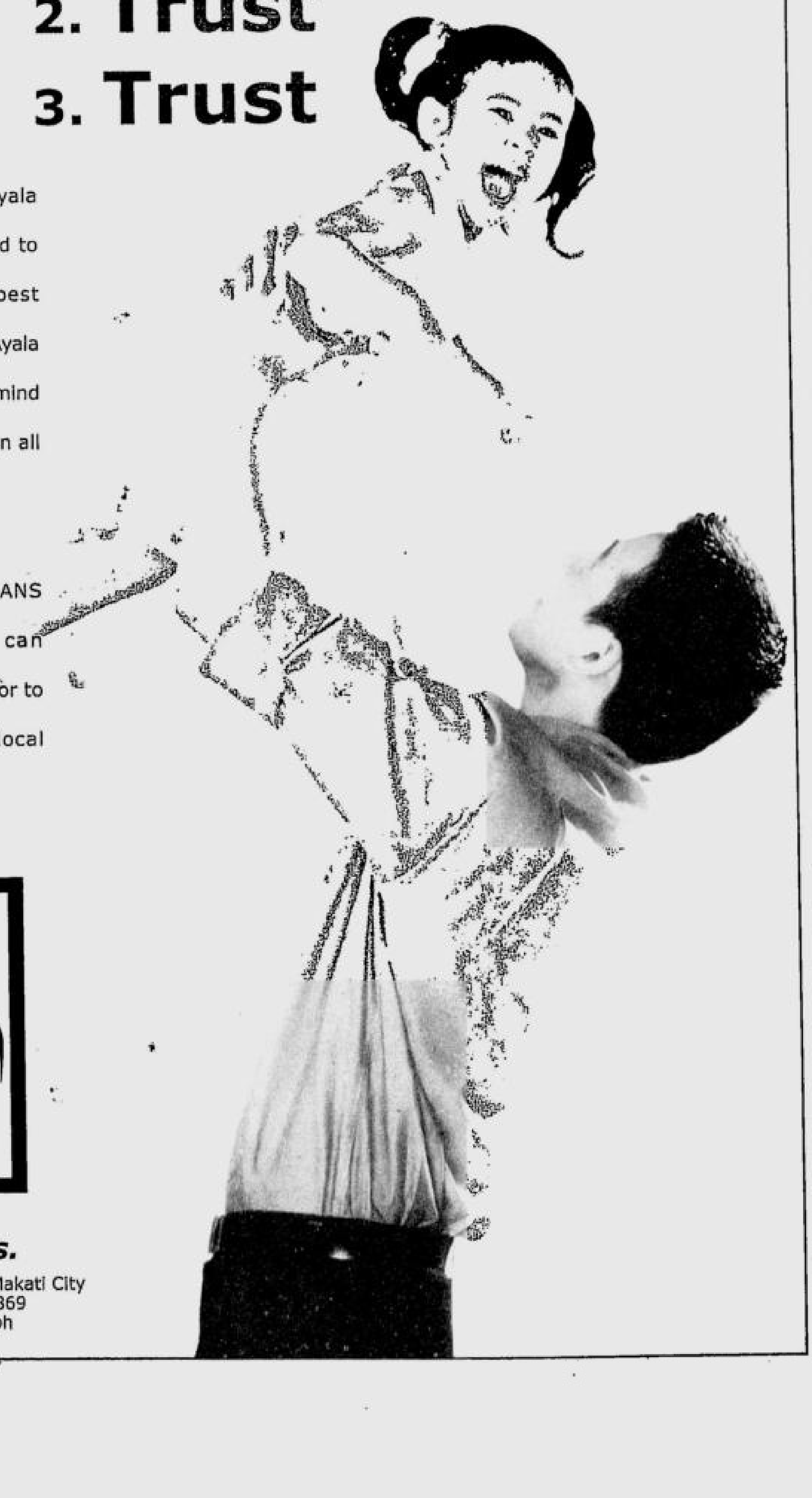
Among the awardees who will earn the distinction of membership in the President's Elite Circle are Francisco Salazar II (Ayala Health-Iloilo); Agustina Viceo (Ayala Health-Makati); Adelaida Sagabay (Ayala Health-Laguna); Erlinda Maraat (Ayala Health-Davao); and Delia Luciano (Ayala Health-Davao).

Moreover, a total of 22 sales agents/consultants who made it to the roster of Ayala Health Care Top Achievers will be accorded with a plaque of achievement. They are as follows: Maryver Mabanta, Gideon Fernandez, Ulysses Taclibon, Wilfredo dela Cruz, Ma. Albina dela Cruz, Manuel Kahapay, Zenaida Rafael, Visitacion Papuyo, Ma. Shiela Maducdoc, Marissa Recto, Dante Amigable, Asuncion Quiambao, Rizaldy Portillo, Victoriana Panoy, Theresa Pineda, Myra Genio, Bernardo Gutierrez, Mia Genio, Lita Salas, Maurice Abigail Fuentes, Rosita Belgira and Elsa Palo.

In addition, the 14 Solo Qualifiers who will receive a certificate of recognition are: Moonyeen Genio-Mercado, Ivy Dar, Christine Fabros, Elsa Armamento, Buenaventura Aguilar, Jr., Cesar Mendoza, Vicente Corpuz, Jr., Araceli Castrence, Tito Gustilo, Ruben Camarista, Josefina Solis, John Bradd, Francisco Puey, and Felma Capinpuyan.

From February 23 to 24, all Ayala Health Care awardees together with their respective guests and some company officers and staff, will celebrate at the Holiday Inn Resort Clarkfield, Pampanga in a spirit of fellowship and more recognition, fun and surprises in honor of Ayala Health Care's best of the year 2000.

Congratulations to all!



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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE AYALA LIFE TOP ACHIEVERS!

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That other white meat

HENRY Ramos, among others, asked about making *tocino*. I do have a circle of friends whom I called up to get their own inputs. Unfortunately, they do not want their names mentioned.

Pork is often referred to as the other white meat. In Vancouver, when I felt like making *adobo*, I had to buy pork from the Chinese butcher. Pork found in supermakets is so lean—really just a thin layer of fat under the skin! That is how far technology with meat has gone. Very long ago, I came across a doctor of veterinary medicine from Romania who was into breeding pork with very little fat. Well, they seem to have done it.

For *tocino*-making though, it is recommended that we use *kasim* or the shoulder part of the carcass. The meat is more marbled (meaning the fat is scattered between the layers of meat) and has more color components (red blood color) which give a more intense pink color to the *tocino*. Prague powder and potassium used for making this product can be found at a store in Farmer's Market. I believe it is at the left side store facing the market.

Tocino

1 kg thinly sliced pork *kasim* (if not available, *pigue* will do)
½ tsp prague powder
½ tsp phosphate
1½ tbsp coarse salt
8 tbsp sugar
1 c shaved ice (this is added 12 hours later)

Mix prague powder, phosphate, salt, sugar and spread this evenly over the pork slices. Seal with a tight plastic cover and keep in the refrigerator overnight.

The next morning, add the shaved ice in between the slices of pork. This will form tiny ice particles within the muscles of the pork meat, thus making it more tender and heavier. Sometimes, one gets 1.5-1.7 kg of *tocino* from this procedure. But this is the way *tocino* is made these days.

One of my readers was asking me what extender is used in making *tocino*. Well, there is the answer—the ice shavings add to volume and weight. Try this proportion—this is the basic recipe. Now you can add other spices and flavorings to it should you wish to alter the

ASK NORA

Nora Daza

product. Like more sugar, for example; this will give a heavier product, too.

Frying the *tocino* longer can make the sugar caramelize and you get some dark brown parts that remind one of the sugar on skin side of some hams.

Chicken Empanada

Pamela M. Tablang of Indang, Cavite asked for a recipe of Chicken Empanada.

Empanadas, like pizza and sandwiches, can have different kinds of filling—flaked fish, ground meat, chicken, potatoes and vegetables (as in curried vegetables). There are now many creative cooks, so one can fill the *empanada* with what one fancies.

Chicken filling:
¼ c butter
½ c fresh mushrooms
2-3 cloves garlic
1 onion, finely chopped
½ c carrots, finely chopped
500 g cooked chicken breast, flaked
250 g potatoes, cut into tiny cubes and fried
¼ c butter
3 tbsp flour
1 c milk

Melt ¼ c butter and add the sliced mushrooms. Allow 3 minutes to have butter flavor the mushrooms. Add garlic and onions and the flaked chicken breast, carrots and fried potatoes. Cook for 3 minutes more. Remove from pan and set aside. Melt butter and add flour (I would use a wire whip here). Slowly pour the milk into the butter-flour mixture. Stir so that there are no lumps. Add the mixture pf chicken and vegetables. Add salt and pepper to taste. Let this mixture cool.

Crust:
2 c all-purpose flour
4 oz butter (125 g)
3 to 4 tbsp ice-cold water
¼ tsp salt

Sift flour before measuring into a bowl. Cut in the butter into the flour with two knives. Add salt. When butter is incorporated into flour so that it looks like coarse breadcrumbs, make a well in the middle and add cold water. With a rubber spatula, mix quickly. As soon as you can, gather the dough into a ball, cover and keep in the refrigerator for 30 minutes allowing dough to rest. This chilled dough also makes it easier to handle and the pastry will shrink less.

Make two balls from the dough for easier handling. Roll one ball between two sheets of wax paper until it is thin and even. Line the pan where the chicken pie will be baked. One can use a large pie plate or a muffin tin or individual baking pots. It would be good to store in the refrigerator until one is ready to use.

If you want to make turnovers, cut the dough into circles and spoon chicken filling. Make a half moon and moisten edge. Use the tines of fork to seal.

Bake chicken pie in oven at 350° for 15 to 20 minutes or until dough is light golden brown.

Mamon

Several readers have asked me for a *mamon* recipe. Here is Taisan from **Maur Aquino Lichauco.**

10 egg yolks
2 whole eggs
1 c sugar
1 c all-purpose flour
1 cup butter, room temperature

Beat egg yolks with whole eggs until light and creamy. Add sugar and continue beating until sugar granules have dissolved. Fold in flour and bake in a loaf pan. Bake at 350° until done. Test with a toothpick. If toothpick comes out clean, it is done. Turn cake onto a platter and spread butter on the cake while still hot. Allow as much butter to be absorbed as possible. Then roll all this in granulated sugar. Delicious! This is what Maur calls her "cholesterol bomb."

E-mail Nora at ngdev@info.com.ph or write her at PDI, Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City

More than a pearl-shakes outlet

THE FIRST Ersao store in the Philippines opened on Banaue Street, QC last May. The store's opening coincided with the pearl-shake bandwagon. Despite its numerous competitors, Ersao (derived from the Chinese meaning "second aunt") developed a very strong following in Quezon City.

What then is Ersao's formula for success? Natural ingredients. The shakes are made from the freshest fruits available. Ersao has also introduced two of its best-selling products: spicy chicken and spicy squid.

Last October, Diso Food Concepts was incorporated to set up and manage Ersao's commissary and business development program. A new outlet will soon open at 6 Madison St., Greenhills West, San Juan. This may become Ersao's model outlet because of its size, strategic location and ample parking space.

Other stores in Metro Manila will open later.

Promo to raffle off Paris trip

JOIN the "Nescafé Classic Breakfast Papremyo" raffle promo and you just might be one of the nine lucky winners who'll be having croissant for breakfast in Paris, France.

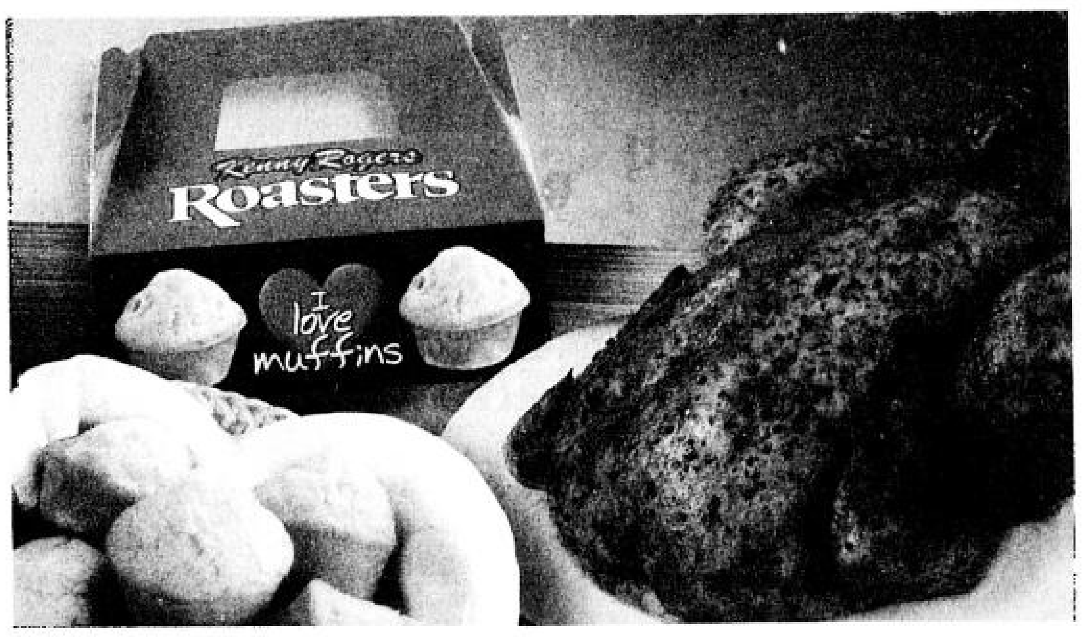
As one of the grand prizewinners, you will get a chance to have breakfast in one of the world's loveliest cities. Have breakfast in one of the quaint Parisian cafés or stop by the majestic Eiffel Tower, where you can get an outstanding view of the City of Lights.

Aside from the trip for two to Paris, France, beginning March 13, nine weekly raffle draw prizes of a bedroom showcase and a kitchen showcase will be given away. And for the grand draw, wake up to a Nescafé morning in your brand-new house and lot worth P2 million.

To join, write your name, address, signature, telephone number and promo title "Nescafé Classic Breakfast Papremyo" at the back of any empty Nescafé Classic refill pack, membrane foil and box top. Drop your entries in Nescafé raffle boxes located at selected supermarkets and grocery stores nationwide.

Or you can join the weekly game show portion on "Eat Bulaga" and get a chance to win cash prizes at a weekly game portion. Simply drop your entries in drop boxes at the Tape Studios, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue corner Aurora Boulevard, QC. Only those who drop their entries at the Tape Studios will qualify as studio contestants.

The nationwide grand raffle draw will be held on "Eat Bulaga" on May 19. Deadline for submission of entries for the grand draw is on May 12.



DOUBLE DEAL . . . WHAT A DEAL!
Kenny Rogers Roasters, the only fast casual-dining chicken chain in the country, gives families and friends the buying power to avail of juicy, delicious roast chicken and half a dozen corn muffins at an affordable price, right in the comfort of their homes and offices. The Kenny Rogers Roasters Double Deal Promo ends Feb. 28.

A most competent chef from Paris

(From page C12)

Over dinner, my companion made the mistake of asking a food-related question. What, she asked, made French cuisine French? Was there a particular essential quality (we now enter into the realm of food metaphysics, *la raison dietetique*) that made it French? She then had to nod understandingly for the next half hour while I held forth on my theories. Later, I put the question to M. Reix. Was it possible to have authentic French cuisine, not just a simulacrum or let's-pretend, outside of France, using local ingredients, and with, possibly, a non-Frenchman behind the stove, perhaps one who hadn't been trained in the classical mode, and if so, admitting the foreign influences on the classical mode, what kept it truly French?

He heard my question out and then, as his character must do, shrugged. "But of course," he said. And that was that.

W. Somerset Maugham once complained, in the preface to one of his books, about being labeled as "competent"; while it was better, he admitted, than being called incompetent, it seemed a term of derision. I mention this anecdote in my early defense; I would like to point out that if you are remotely interested in French cuisine, and are not about to hop onto a plane to Paris in the near future, you should go to Le Cheval Blanc and form your own opinion on the (simplified) cooking of M. Reix; not forgetting, of course, to have an enjoyable meal while you're doing it. Alain Reix at the Cheval Blanc may not be luminous, but he is *competent*—extremely so—and that's more than you can say for most of what passes for French food in Manila at this time.

Heny Sison

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

March 3 (Sat.) 9:30 - 4:00 p.m.	BASIC FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS by: Glenn Remorca, Floral Designer	P 2,000
March 5 (Mon.) 9:30 - 4:00 p.m.	CREPE WORKSHOP by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 6-10 (Tuesday-Saturday)	GUM PASTE FLOWER MAKING by: Heny Sison 9:00-12:00 noon (Full Participation)	P 3,500
March 6-10 (Tuesday-Saturday)	ADVANCED CAKE DECORATION 1:30-5:00 p.m. by: Heny Sison (Full Participation)	P 5,000
March 12 (Monday) 9:00-12:30 noon	BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison	P 1,200
March 12 (Monday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	QUICK BREADS by: Heny Sison	P 1,200
March 13 (Tuesday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	LAURIAT SAMPLER I by: Katherine Sion	P 1,500
March 14 (Wednesday) 9:00-12:00 noon	BROWNIES & BARS by: Heny Sison	P 1,200
March 14 (Wednesday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	COFFEE! COFFEE! COFFEE! by: Aileen Anastacio	P 1,200
March 15 (Thursday) 9:00-12:00 noon	THE ART OF LOW FAT DESSERTS by: Jill Sandique	P 1,200
March 15 (Thursday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	PASTA GALORE by: Aileen Anastacio	P 1,500
March 16 (Friday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	FRENCH BISTRO DESSERTS by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 17 (Saturday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	DESIGNER PIZZA & CALZONE By: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 19 (Monday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	LAURIAT SAMPLER II by: Katherine Sion	P 1,500
March 20 (Tuesday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	CUBAN CUISINE by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 21 (Wednesday) 9:00-12:30 p.m.	FRENCH COOKING III by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 21 (Wednesday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	COOKING CLASS: Menu I by: Aileen Anastacio	P 1,500
March 22 (Thursday) 9:00-1:00 p.m.	ITALIAN COOKING I by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 22 (Thursday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	DESSERT COFFEES by: Aileen Anastacio	P 1,200
March 23 (Friday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP I by: Jill Sandique	P 1,750
March 24 - (Saturday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP II by: Jill Sandique	P 1,750
March 26 (Monday) 9:00-12:30 p.m.	FRENCH COOKING IV by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 27 (Tuesday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	CLASSIC & CONTEMPORARY PASTRIES by: Jill Sandique	P 1,200
March 28 (Wednesday) 9:00-12:30 noon	BISCUITS, COBBLERS AND POPOVERS by: Jill Sandique	P 1,200
March 28 (Wednesday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	COOKING CLASS: Menu II by: Aileen Anastacio	P 1,500
March 29 (Thursday) 9:00-12:30 p.m.	ITALIAN COOKING II by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 29 (Thursday) 1:30-5:00 p.m.	PANINO (GOURMET SANDWICHES) & SOUPS by: Aileen Anastacio	P 1,500
March 30 (Friday) 10:00-4:00 p.m.	CAJUN COOKING by: Jill Sandique	P 1,500
March 31 (Saturday) 9:30-3:30 p.m.	DESSERTS MADE EASY by: Jill Sandique	P 1,200

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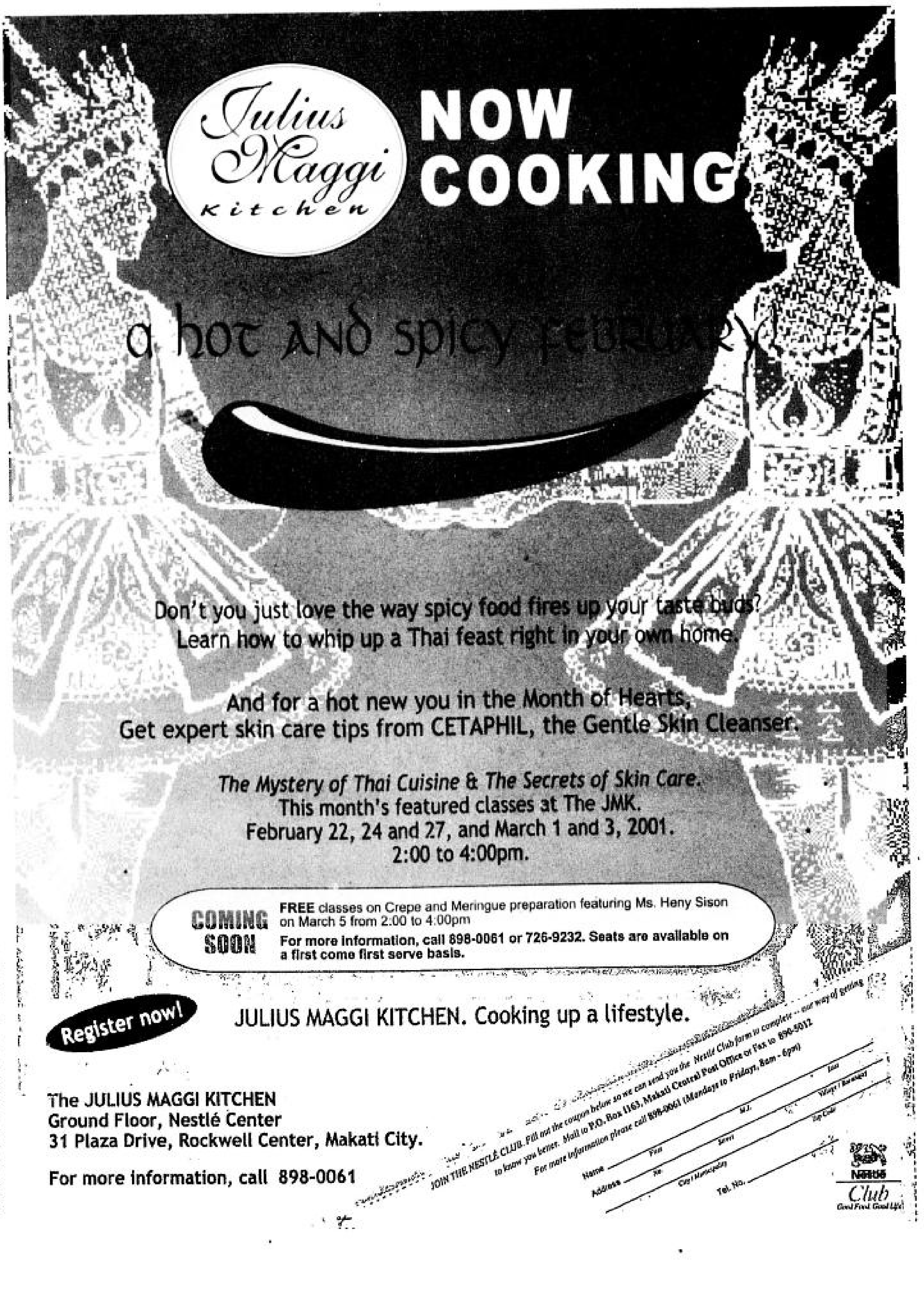

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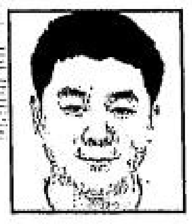

Clinton Palanca

Alain Reix is the 'chef de cuisine' of the Jules Verne restaurant at the Eiffel Tower; this week at Le Cheval Blanc his inspired layering of flavors is star 'du jour'

WHEN I sat down with my lessors a long time ago to begin negotiations for my restaurant, I remember them asking me what my "concept" was. What did this mean? I asked them. A concept, they replied, was what would make my restaurant distinct from all the others, such as surrounding the diners with aquariums, having all the food served in gigantic portions, or dancing midgets in Tyrolean costumes. I told them that I didn't have a concept; I simply would serve food that I thought was good, in surroundings that I thought were pleasant.

The original French restaurants began thus: after the revolution, the cooks whose masters' heads were rolling in baskets began to set up democratic eating places for anyone with the resources to spend on food. To complete their victory, the newly wealthy middle-class began demanding that the restaurants they frequented rather resemble the chateaux that had been emptied out. Over the course of the next century, French interior design evolved somewhat, but essentially this is why the classical French restaurant (Taillevent being the sturdiest and most respected of these old warhorses) looks the way it does.

These designs, along with what is essentially a 19th-century arsenal of eating implements and chinaware, became entrenched as being classically French. (A fairly recent popularization, the sauce spoon, is currently the subject of hot debate, that is, among the few really weird people who debate about such things: it is a flat, spade-like implement used for spooning sauce into one's mouth; it replaces the old habit of pushing a piece of bread around the plate to mop up the sauce.) These have been replicated in French restaurants around the world, along with headwaiters in tuxedos and the "What would ze madam desire tonight?" manner of service.

Le Cheval Blanc is a French "theme" restaurant; in other words, its "concept" is that it's a classical French restaurant. This is not necessarily a bad thing; nor, obviously, is it *sui generis*: basically every such restaurant outside of Europe is a theme restaurant. But it's important to understand that it is about as authentic as those medieval restaurants where the waitpersons were dressed in frocks and tunics and had cardboard swords strapped to their belts. It's a game of let's-dress-up-and-pretend; and the game at this place is let's-pretend-to-be-French. Fine.

CHEF Alain Reix

French import

Enter, though, into this highly enjoyable and fairly convincing dining experience, an import. Just as basketball teams import players, Le Cheval Blanc has imported a French chef, and one of no small importance, either. His name is Alain Reix, and he is the *chef de cuisine* of the Jules Verne restaurant at the Eiffel Tower. The Jules Verne has one star from the Guide Michelin and a 16/20 rating from the Gault-Millau, which calls his cuisine "*irreprochable de legerete et de maitrise*," while the desserts "*frolent la perfection.*" My French isn't too good, but this sounds like praise to me.

I requested a few minutes with the chef after my meal, and put a certain amount of pressure on my date that night by asking her to be my translator. To everyone's relief, M. Reix spoke very passable English, and I tried to help things along by trying to use as many Latinate, rather than Anglo-Saxon words, as I could, as well as a corny French accent that I gleaned largely from Monty Python.

For my entrée, I had had pan-seared foie gras on raw marinated fish, while she had had oysters and mussels with mashed potatoes in a cream sauce. It turned out, later, that these had been good choices. M. Reix explained later that one of the things he was known for was combining meat and seafood: thus, the foie gras with the fish; he also served John Dory fish with a meat sauce. The layering of flavors on my plate was excellent and inspired; it sounds strange but tastes wonderful in the mouth. I found the textures too similar, though; something *croustillant* would have added extra interest. Her sauce was sublime: cream sauce as only French cuisine can make, and warm, sexy oysters, slippery and redolent of the sea.

We ran into a snag with the main courses. She had ordered lamb chops deliberately, as a test: if a chef is good, everything at the restaurant should be not just excellent, but interesting as well, and she wanted to see what he could do with lamb chops. Well, he did with lamb chops what most normal people would have done: grilled them with some herbs and set them beside mashed potatoes.

Meanwhile, I had ordered the duck breast. Contrary to popular belief, this is not a classical French meat; it's a relatively recent offshoot of the foie gras industry, a way of using the breasts of all the ducks raised for their livers. (The whole ducks, sold in France with the head and webbed feet still on, should ideally not have come from a foie gras duck.) It's a wonderful meat, very lean and flavorful; but it has the problem of very lean meats: it dries out quickly. The French serve it very raw, like a barely seared steak, somewhere between *bleu* and *a point*. This one (or rather, part of one; I received three slices in the center of the plate) was definitely cooked: not gray and dried out, by any means, but certainly medium-well. It came surrounded by three ravioli of snails (making ravioli out of unexpected things was one of the better experiments of nouvelle cuisine) and a brown sauce. I won't describe it any further because it was simply that: a brown sauce.

And dessert? Gault-Millau describes his desserts at Jules Verne as "*fondante tarte au chocolat manjari... beignets d'abricots avec un lait glace a l'amande etincelant...*" The other night, halfway across the world, she had rose ice cream (three scoops, with a pastry disk balanced atop), while I had *pain d'epices*, spiced bread, made into, well, French toast, with a scoop of vanilla ice cream and a baked apple. The rose ice cream was good, but repetitive; I prefer rose flavors in dessert the way Pierre Herme uses them at Laduree: an accent, a touch, a bit of whimsy. My dessert worked, but in a rather intellectual sort of way.

Simplified but enjoyable

Okay, okay, I'm nitpicking. It was a very good meal: the company, the lighting, the service, and yes, even the food. I asked M. Reix if the food had been simplified from what he usually served at his own restaurant. He admitted that it had: without his usual kitchen brigade and equipment, he wasn't confident enough of replicating the complexity of his Paris dishes. I also rather bluntly asked M. Reix why he had been downgraded from two Michelin stars to one; he shrugged (I'm not actually sure if he did, but I write that to keep him in character as a Frenchman) and said that Michelin thought he served too many covers at a time. Of the various chefs working today, he expresses admiration for Pierre Gagnaire, but most of all for Alain Passard (of L'Arpege), his neighbor in the 7th arrondissement.

A MOST/ p.C11

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